

DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST MAGICIANS

THE BOOK OF MAGIC

**WALTER
GIBSON**

WITH A
FOREWORD BY

**HOWARD
THURSTON**

MASTER
MAGICIAN





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THE BOOK OF MAGIC

Walter B. Gibson

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THE BOOK OF MAGIC

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INTRODUCTION

This book marked the culmination of a twelve year period in which I contributed dozens of articles to magical magazines, conducted daily columns on puzzles and simple tricks, plus a weekly series of fifty magic lessons for Howard Thurston, then America's leading stage magician. In it, I covered all phases of magic then current, from simple tricks to large illusions, updating them to the present with an eye for the future.

The Book received consistently good reviews, which gradually faded into obscurity while the sales subsided into the same depths, until *fifteen years later*, Paul Fleming awoke new interest by including it in a series of reviews, in which he stated, in part:

Walter Gibson is one of the best informed writers in the world of magic. He is himself a performer of distinction, and as a consequence he writes with authority born of experience. Back of him are many years of association with Thurston, Blackstone, Raymond, and other great and near great magicians, some of whom have shared their secrets with him. Finally, he is a skilled writer, which means that he has the knack of explaining a trick so that the reader can really understand it. His technical skill as both magician and writer enables him to describe a feat with brevity, but this conciseness of explanation, as practiced by Mr. Gibson, does not lead to lack of clarity. On the contrary, by economizing on words but choosing his phrases with care, he achieves a remark-

able *thoroughness* in his descriptions of sleights and tricks . . .

We believe we have said enough to justify the statement, . . . that THE WORLD'S BEST BOOK OF MAGIC "has never received the recognition it deserves." But we have yet to mention what seems to us one of its chief points of interest and value - the *personal comments* of the author on what to do and what not to do, in performing certain sleights and tricks. Such advice may mean the difference between success and failure. Mr. Gibson is generous in giving the reader the benefit of his years of experience, both as a performer and an observer of other performers. The net result is a *practical* touch that is lacking in many books on magic.

Coming from Paul Fleming, this was great. He was not only the outstanding authority on magical literature; he was America's foremost magician in his chosen field. Annually, over a period of many years, he toured the United States from Coast to Coast, presenting a full evening entertainment of magic in the auditoriums of the leading colleges and universities, establishing legerdemain as the high art it deserved to be.

After that review, the existing supply of *The World's Best Book of Magic* soon sold out and for another thirty-five years, people have persistently asked me: "When will there be a new edition?"

The answer is NOW; and THIS IS IT!

Foreword

BY HOWARD THURSTON

World's Master Magician

MAGIC HAS BEEN MY PROFESSION for more than thirty years.

In that time, I have seen many changes and advances in the art; but its great appeal—the love of mystery—has always been the same.

Intelligent, cultured people enjoy magic more than the uneducated. They are quick to realize the artistic effort that lies behind a trick or an illusion. The average person of to-day possesses greater knowledge than the typical man of years ago; hence magic is now more popular than ever before.

Despite the marvels of modern invention, magic still holds its own, and always will; for with increasing knowledge of natural laws that lead to the simple explanation of apparent wonders, the mysterious becomes less common, and therefore more intriguing.

When I succeeded Harry Kellar, twenty years ago, I had the largest magical show in America, and the greatest in the world. It required the assistance of from ten to fifteen persons, and a car-load of apparatus.

Since then, I have more than tripled the size of the production. Now forty people are necessary, and three baggage cars are needed to transport the paraphernalia. My live-stock includes dozens of rabbits, pigeons, geese, dogs, monkeys, a donkey, a horse, and a lion; in fact, it has assumed the proportions of menagerie.

The public has demanded new tricks, and specular illusions, and in order to supply that demand, I have added to my show year by year, until it has reached its present size as a natural consequence.

Whenever I appear before a large audience, I can sense the interest that is there—the desire to see magic and to enjoy mystery. Children love magic, and are real enthusiasts; but the lure of the mysterious extends to adults, and is not forgotten with the passing of years. It is an interest that keeps people young, and restores the glamor of youthful days.

Every year, thousands of people witness my performances who have seen my show years ago, when they were children. Twenty years has produced a new generation, and the children of two decades ago have not forgotten the wonders of the stage that were to them the actual visualization of magic carpets and enchanted princesses.

I study my audiences, and I have learned much about them in my thirty-odd years of experience. It is the students, the thinkers, and the keen persons who love the art, for the simple reason that a feat of magic, properly performed, is psychologically correct, and intended to deceive the mind of the trained spectator.

In my performances before royalty and persons of high standing, I have always found most appreciative audiences. I have entertained several kings of Europe, and Oriental potentates; and my performance in the White House, before President Coolidge, in 1925, was one of my most successful entertainments, from an artistic standpoint.

Interest in magic is increasing, because more people are studying it. Some of the most proficient amateur magicians in America are doctors, lawyers, ministers, and men of other professions. With them, magic is more than a hobby. They have learned its fascination, and they enjoy it as an art.

There is a demand for knowledge in the mystic art, with its modern developments; and magical literature meets this demand. Good books on conjuring are essential to its development; and with the rapid strides that are being made in the creation of new tricks and illusions, it is important that new books should be up to date.

The old school of legerdemain has passed; to-day the modern magician—be he amateur or professional—accomplishes his mysteries through the use of new principles and advanced methods.

This book has been written by a magician of the new school; a man who is a student of magic and who is acquainted with the needs of to-day. I can, therefore, recommend it to all students of the art as a volume of great value and practical worth.

Preface

MAGIC HAS A FASCINATION all its own.

Music may have its soothing charms, but magic creates a sensation of absolute wonderment.

The art of modern magic, or conjuring, appeals to every individual; but the magician, himself, experiences the greatest of its enchantments and any one who has delved into the hidden secrets of the mystic art has never regretted his actions.

As a hobby, magic is a wonderful form of diversion; as an accomplishment, it is of high merit; as a profession, it has brought fame and fortune to many who have made it their life's work.

Most present-day students of legerdemain pursue magic as an avocation, and profit greatly thereby. While the study of nearly every other art develops the student along special lines, conjuring is broader in its scope, and produces a natural course of training that brings amazing results.

While the amateur musician is often reluctant to perform before a company, the amateur magician finds his principal method of progress in displaying his wares to friends and acquaintances. After he has developed into a conjurer of ordinary skill, he is surprised to find that he has not only developed a certain degree of digital dexterity; but he has also attained self-confidence and poise; has become accomplished in elocution and dramatic expression; and, greatest of all, has acquired an aptitude for quick thinking in emergencies.

This does not mean that the man who can perform a few pocket

tricks will automatically achieve half a dozen other desirable attainments; but he will most certainly improve himself along those lines. The youth who takes an active interest in legerdemain will experience exceptional progress in self-development.

The art of modern magic has undergone vast changes in recent years. The old text-books that dealt with cumbersome apparatus, and depicted the magician in a dress-suit lined with all sorts of voluminous pockets, are now out of date. The modern magician may accomplish greater mysteries in an every-day suit, without the aid of clumsy tables with noisy traps. A new era of conjuring has come into being, and advances in the art have outstripped the literature of legerdemain. The purpose of this volume is to deal thoroughly with the art of magic as it exists to-day; and to form a basic foundation for the future development of the new art of conjuring.

The Romance of Magic

MAGIC IS PROBABLY THE MOST ANCIENT of all arts. In various forms, it has existed since the dawn of civilization. Man has always recognized the powers of nature, and has expressed belief in supernatural agencies. With that recognition and that belief there has been the ever-present desire to master the unknown forces. The leaders of ancient tribes, who attained their positions by mental and physical superiority, were quick to realize the prestige they would gain if their people believed them to be endowed with superhuman ability. Hence they employed magic as one of their most powerful instruments.

It has been said that every race, no matter how uncivilized it may be, has some form of religion. Concurrently every race has its variation of magic. The medicine men of the Indians and the witch doctors of the native Africans exerted more influence over their tribesmen than did their vague conceptions of a Supreme Being. Savages who have readily been converted to Christianity have still persisted in their beliefs in the power of their native sorcerers; and the task of weaning them from their age-old superstitions is by no means an easy one.

In the history of early civilization, magic and religion were synonymous. The priests of Egypt were magicians; the priests of Babylon claimed a knowledge of the black art. To substantiate their claims of supernatural powers, they commonly resorted to the practice of natural magic—the accomplishment of apparently supernatural marvels by the employment of natural methods.

The first magical performance on record was that of Tchatcha-em-

ankh, an Egyptian magician, who performed before King Khufu about the year 3766 B.C. The Westcar papyrus, now preserved in the British Museum, tells of this sorcerer, and states that "he knoweth how to make a lion follow him as if led by a rope; he knoweth how to bind on a head which hath been cut off."

The story of Daniel and the priests of Bel, which is recorded in the Dounay Bible, relates how Daniel exposed the methods of the priests of Babylon. When food was set nightly before the great idol, no trace of it remained the next day. Daniel revealed the imposture by sprinkling ashes on the floor; and, in the morning, the king discovered the footprints, which showed that the priests and their families had entered the room by a secret door, and had enjoyed the sumptuous repast themselves.

There were numerous mechanical marvels in the temples of the ancient Greeks and Romans that were accepted as genuine miracles by the common people. These secrets were carefully guarded by the initiated.

Magic flourished in the middle ages. The operations of supposed sorcerers and witches were supplemented by the activities of astrologers and alchemists. These men were crude inventors; but they kept their secrets to themselves, and sought to establish themselves as being of supernormal ability. Many a necromancer attained prestige through the employment of mechanical methods, aided by the universal belief in spirits and the unfailing popularity of superstition.

Thus the development of natural magic proceeded. Traveling mountebanks who gave sleight-of-hand performances, or who exhibited mechanical contrivances, were regarded as jugglers; yet they possessed as much actual knowledge as did the self-styled wizards who clothed their deceptions in the robe of mystery.

The dawn of modern civilization, and the era of invention, caused the waning of pretended miracles. Yet the ever popular demand for

mystery remained. A Renaissance occurred in the art of magic. Traveling performers, armed with new marvels, vied with the survivors of the old regime. The art of modern magic had come into being.

The last half of the eighteenth century witnessed this curious struggle for supremacy. Joseph Balsamo, so-called Comte de Cagliostro, astonished the aristocracy of France with his bold charlatanry, and restored popular belief in forgotten tenets of necromancy. But while he pursued his precarious career, another Joseph, surnamed Pinetti, was winning fame and fortune as a professor of natural magic. The sensational pretences of the notorious Cagliostro have kept his name alive until this day, whereas Pinetti is now unknown; but in their heyday, the fame of the Chevalier Pinetti reached many countries where the name of the Comte de Cagliostro was little known.

Both of these men were boastful, and overburdened with self-esteem; both claimed to be wonder workers, and assumed lordly manners; but their methods were diametrically opposite. Cagliostro was unscrupulously capitalizing upon the reputations of the charlatans who had preceded him, and was employing the same methods as the ancient priests of Egypt; while Pinetti, seeking to reconcile his art with the advance of modern science, was pursuing an honorable career, and was proving that there can be such a thing as honest deception!

It should not be understood that Pinetti was the very first exponent of the art of modern conjuring; nor, for that matter, was Cagliostro the last of the necromancers. But the majority of Pinetti's predecessors were hardly more than jugglers, who included certain conjuring tricks in their performances. Pinetti learned his mysteries from various sources, and moulded them into a finished program that far surpassed the entertainments presented by earlier magicians. His repertoire was

quite extensive, and many of the items he presented have survived to the present time. He and his wife performed a "second sight trick," possibly the first version of the pseudo-telepathic performance which has become popular on the modern stage. He exhibited remarkable automatic figures; and presented the amazing experiment of removing a man's shirt without disturbing the rest of his clothing. Furthermore, he was one of the original "escape kings," as he freed himself from chains and shackles, more than a hundred years before the introduction of the now famous "handcuff act." He also allowed his thumbs to be tied together, then released them and rejoined them instantaneously without disturbing the knots. To-day, this trick is frequently exhibited on the vaudeville stage, and was introduced fifteen or twenty years ago, as a marvel of the Orient, by Japanese conjurers.

Pinetti was not without rivals. Other performers of wonders met with marked success, but their fame was trifling when compared with that of the great Chevalier. But, at the close of the eighteenth century, Pinetti encountered his Nemesis, in the guise of Count Edmond de Grisy, a young Frenchman, who had fled from his native land during the revolution. De Grisy had won some fame as a magician in Naples; and when Pinetti arrived there, he found that he had a rising rival. Accordingly, he affected friendship towards de Grisy, and made arrangements for the young nobleman to give an immense performance before the elite of Naples. But all this cordiality merely masked the treachery in Pinetti's heart. When de Grisy appeared upon the stage, and began his entertainment, everything went wrong, and the affair developed into a fiasco. Pinetti had secretly made arrangements for the disaster. The Frenchman's reputation was ruined, and Pinetti left Naples confident that he had destroyed a budding rival. But de Grisy, seeking vengeance, spent his entire fortune in preparing a show which would outshine Pinetti's. Then he set out to compete with the Italian magician; and did not cease his

efforts until he had ruined his opponent. Pinetti met with failure, and died in poverty about the year 1800.

One of de Grisy's famous triumphs was his performance before Pope Pius VII. On that occasion, he borrowed a watch from a cardinal who was present, and smashed it to atoms. He gathered the broken pieces, caused them to disappear, and they were discovered in a pocket of the pontiff's robe!

This mystery was effected through the aid of a duplicate watch, which de Grisy had specially prepared for the occasion. He substituted the duplicate for the original watch, adroitly palmed the original into the Pope's pocket, and then pounded the duplicate to pieces. The vanishing of the broken pieces was a simple matter, but the result was remarkable!

In the year 1925, Howard Thurston, the famous magician, duplicated de Grisy's performance, by presenting the watch trick before President Coolidge at the White House. On this occasion, Thurston actually borrowed the president's watch, substituted a duplicate for it, and destroyed the duplicate. The president's watch was found in a loaf of bread, brought from the kitchen. In showing the trick, Thurston utilized an apparatus known as the "changing bag," for exchanging the watches. Through the mistake of an assistant, the watches were not exchanged. Thurston was just about to strike the genuine watch with a hammer when his assistant rushed to him and whispered that a mistake had been made! Thurston paused in the trick, secretly received the duplicate watch from the assistant, and made the exchange by sleight of hand. So the trick came to a happy conclusion!

But to return to de Grisy. He became the greatest magician of his day; but his success was short lived. He accidentally shot his son when performing the "Bullet Catching Mystery," and he was imprisoned for a brief time. Upon his release, he adopted the stage name of

Torrini, and thenceforth toured the provinces, never fully recovering from his misfortune. But de Grisy, now Torrini, was destined to play a further part in the romance of modern magic. About the year 1830, his traveling wagon came across a young man who was lying unconscious on the road near Blois, France. Torrini played the part of the Good Samaritan, and learned that the young man was an amateur conjurer named Jean-Eugene Robert. Under Torrini's tutelage, Robert became a skilled magician, and soon branched out as a magician, calling himself Jean-Eugene Robert-Houdin, Houdin being the family name of his wife.

In the year 1845, rtt-Houdin opened his own theater in Paris, and ushered in a new era in the art of magic. Prior to that time, magicians had universally adopted fantastic costumes resembling the trappings of medieval astrologers—long, flowing robes, with pointed caps, and huge sleeves. The apparatus of Pinetti and Torrini were huge, clumsy contrivances. Heavy, draped tables, large enough to contain concealed assistants, were representative of their paraphernalia. The public, becoming more and more enlightened, had gradually learned their principal secrets, and magicians were hopelessly out of date as popular performers. A German magician, Herr Wiljalba Frikell, had, a few years before Houdin's Parisian debut, lost his conjuring apparatus in a fire. In order to cope with the emergency, he had donned evening clothes, and had given an exhibition in sleight of hand, using undraped tables, and very little apparatus. His performance was so well received that he abandoned his old trappings, and wore evening clothes thenceforth. Houdin adopted the same innovation. The appearance of a magician in drawing-room dress took Paris by storm. He invented new devices to suit his style of performance, and only retained the tricks which could be presented without cumbersome appliances. Houdin was the son of a watchmaker, and had, for a time, followed his father's trade; hence he possessed a mechanical knowledge that served

him well in the preparation of his mysteries.

Houdin employed electricity in his illusions, and one of his most famous mysteries was accomplished through the aid of electromagnetism. At one time he visited Algiers, where he astonished the natives with his magic, and outshone their own celebrated wizards, the Marabouts.

Many remarkable stories are related in Houdin's autobiography, in which the great conjurer deals exhaustively with his life's adventures. The universal acceptance of these memoirs has caused the name of Houdin to be considered the greatest in the annals of magic, and to him has been ascribed the invention of many tricks and automata. But, unfortunately, the great French magician was an egotist, and claimed as his creations many devices which were invented before his day.

This fault was not peculiar to Houdin alone. His contemporaries, as well as his predecessors, all thought well of themselves, and the habit is still popular among modern conjurers. In his rivalry with other magicians, Houdin did not hesitate to glorify his own achievements, and to belittle those of his contemporaries; and the other conjurers of the period followed the same tactics. But Houdin's memoirs were his master-stroke. Only his story survived; those of his contemporaries were forgotten, and the name of Houdin has won recognition in scientific circles, and in encyclopedias, which do not mention the names of other magicians who were quite as famous in their day as was Houdin.

One of these was Henri Robin, who had his own theater in Paris at the time of Robert-Houdin's appearance there. Robin was a polished gentleman, and a conjurer of exceptional skill. He declared that he had produced the famous "Inexhaustible Bottle" trick three years before Houdin claimed its invention. The trick is unquestionably of earlier origin; yet physicists speak of it as the "Robert-Houdin bottle."

John Henry Anderson, the "Wizard of the North," was a Scotch

magician, who won great fame throughout the British Isles. He was born in 1814, nine years after Houdin. He, likewise, featured the "Inexhaustible Bottle," and a political cartoon, published in "Punch," in 1843, proves that he was performing it at that date—four years prior to Houdin's first appearance with it. Anderson relied upon tons of heavy apparatus, gigantic advertising schemes, and bombastic methods. He was a skilled show-man, and sought to please the masses, rather than the upper classes.

Robert Heller, an Englishman, was another famous magician of the mid-Victorian period. He traveled extensively in the United States, and created a great sensation with his marvelous "Second Sight," a pretended telepathic performance, which he styled "Hellerism." Robert-Houdin also performed a version of the "Second Sight" act, assisted by his young son. Thus it will be seen that the art of magic flourished in the days of Houdin, and that other conjurers won fame that equalled, and possibly surpassed, that of the noted Frenchman. Houdin was not an extensive traveler, and his reputation was gained principally in France. Nevertheless, his influence on the development of modern magic was very great; and he constantly sought to advance his performances to a more scientific state, so that many of his rivals, who might have been content to continue the old style of conjuring, also sought to create new mysteries and to invent new appliances.

Just as Torrini, as the teacher of Houdin, was indirectly responsible for the new era of conjuring, so was Carl Herrmann the progenitor of the next important development. Carl Herrmann was a contemporary of Houdin, and while his programs lacked originality, his performances were faultless. He was born in 1816, made his English debut in 1848, and died in 1887, having made a fortune during his brilliant career. During the early sixties, he appeared in America, and introduced to the public his nephew, Alexander Herrmann. Carl later returned to Europe, leaving the western hemisphere to his youthful

successor. Alexander Herrmann rapidly became famous, and was known as Herrmann the Great. He was a born magician. His Mephistophelean physiognomy, aided by his marvelous dexterity, made his entertainments seem almost supernatural. He was, indeed, a modern necromancer.

Herrmann, of course, retained the style of conjuring made famous by Houdin. He appeared in evening dress as a present-day wizard. But he brought back the heavy type of paraphernalia, thoroughly modernized, and ushered in the era of stage illusions. The vanishing of living persons, the aerial suspension of a woman, and other amazing creations formed a large portion of his program. He was ably assisted by his wife, Adelaide Herrmann, who, to-day, fifty years after her marriage to Herrmann, appears on the stage as a magicienne.

Contemporary with Alexander Herrmann was Buatier de Kolta, who was a genius in the creation of stupendous illusions. As a public performer, de Kolta was not to be classed with Herrmann; but his inventions were so numerous, and so astounding, that he was very successful. His creations, copied by other magicians, formed the groundwork of twentieth century magic.

Herrmann died suddenly in 1896, while he was at the height of his career. De Kolta's death occurred seven years later. For a few years, Hermann's nephew, Leon Herrmann, endeavored to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious uncle, but his success was not great. Harry Kellar became the leading magician of the twentieth century, and modern magic rapidly assumed its present stage of development.

Very singularly, a non-professional magician, Angelo Lewis, was responsible for the most striking evolution in the romance of natural magic. Lewis was an Englishman, a lawyer by profession, and in 1878, he wrote a thorough treatise on the art of conjuring as it then existed. His book was entitled "Modern Magic." Prior to 1878, there was no real literature on the subject of legerdemain. Magicians learned their

secrets from others of their profession; amateur performers were comparatively few; and all secrets jealously guarded. Lewis, adopting the pen name of Professor Hoffmann, threw a thunderbolt into the camp of the conjurers. He revealed many of their choicest methods, and many professional magicians felt that their death-knell had been sounded. On the contrary, Hoffmann's writings gave a new impetus to the art of magic. New methods were devised to replace old ones. New tricks came into being, and within a few years, the science of prestidigitation was almost revolutionized. Hoffmann followed with other books; new writers appeared in the field; and magic gradually developed a literature, which has now reached large proportions. Thousands of amateur magicians came into being. During the past twenty-five years, several magazines have been produced regularly, devoting their pages exclusively to conjuring. Every large city has its dealer in magical apparatus. It has been estimated that there are more than fifty thousand persons in the United States who have an active interest in magic. There are probably as many more in England. Thus magic has become a real art, with its host of enthusiasts, who are not incited by any hopes of financial gain, and who hold a position similar to that of amateur musicians. The Society of American Magicians has more than one thousand active members, and there are other organizations which also boast a good-sized membership.

Until the year 1909, Harry Kellar reigned supreme as America's leading magician. Then he announced Howard Thurston as his successor. Thurston had, at that time, won considerable fame, and had recently returned from a world tour. Taking Kellar's show, Thurston continued his regular annual tours, and added new illusions to his repertoire until he had increased the performance to double its original size. At the present day, Thurston's show represents the highest development of modern magic. It is a great production that requires the assistance of more than thirty persons.

While other magicians have gained successful results with full evening entertainments on the legitimate stage, the great expense of maintaining a show that will meet with the exacting demands of the present-day public has turned attention to the specialized branches of the mystic art. Some of the most skillful American performers have entered the Chautauqua and Lyceum fields, while the exponents of pure sleight of hand have gained their reputation on the vaudeville stage. But sleight of hand has probably reached its greatest perfection through the work of amateurs who do not have to sacrifice their artistic endeavors in order to satisfy the popular demand for sensational mysteries.

In England, specialized magic has enjoyed a greater prosperity than in America. This has been largely due to the efforts of the late John Nevil Maskelyne, who devoted nearly fifty years to the advancement of conjuring. Maskelyne was a genius in the invention of illusions, and he devised several automata that were remarkable creations. He opened a theater of magic in London, known as Egyptian Hall, which was later supplanted by St. George's Hall. In partnership with David Devant, England's leading magician, Maskelyne established St. George's Hall as "England's Home of Mystery," and on the stage of that theater, conjuring has reached a high point of artistic merit.

No record of modern magic would be complete without the story of the surprising career of "Billy" Robinson. Robinson was an assistant of Herrmann, and he possessed a thorough knowledge of stage mechanics as applied to magic. After Herrmann's death, he joined Leon Herrmann, and then endeavored to establish himself as a professional illusionist, but without success.

A Chinese conjurer, Ching Ling Foo, visited England and America, and was accorded an enthusiastic reception. So after the Chinaman's departure, Robinson went to Europe, adopted a Chinese make-up, and made his debut as the Mandarin magician, Chung Ling Soo. By

dressing the superior creations of Occidental magic in an Oriental guise, he met with immediate success. No one knew that he was an American, and for several years he kept up the innocent deception until he had firmly established himself. Then he revealed his nationality, and gained greater fame thereby. Robinson's career came to an unfortunate end. In the year 1918, he presented the "Bullet Catching" trick in London, and was accidentally killed during the production.

It is an absolute fact that the magic of Europe and America is far superior to that of Oriental countries. Nevertheless, the art has reached a stage of advancement in every civilized country. The performances of Chinese magicians, while limited in their scope, contain many excellent illusions. The greatest of all deceptions—the famous "Linking Rings"—is, presumably, of Chinese origin. Japanese magic is also a well-developed art. The methods of Hindu conjurers are inferior, as the performers are generally street entertainers. In all the Oriental countries, magicians have learned their methods from their forefathers, and their secrets have been carefully guarded. Thus, a century ago, the work of Oriental mystifiers compared very favorably with that of European conjurers; but the advances of Houdin, Herrmann and others have lifted Western magic to a much higher plane.

Just as the Japanese have imitated the methods of Western civilization, and have become a highly progressive race, so have their magicians copied the creations of Occidental magic. Thus there are a number of Japanese conjurers who are skilled in the presentation of the latest mystic creations. One well-known Japanese performer has even adopted evening dress, which forms a surprising contrast to his Oriental stage setting.

Now that the secrets of magic are no longer guarded with jealousy, the art of legerdemain is gaining recognition which it has long deserved. Students of the mystic art learn that conjuring is a scientific

subject that is worthy of more than passing notice. The man who understands the methods of magicians knows how to appreciate a good conjuring performance, just as a person who knows something about music can enjoy an excellent concert.

Natural magic has always been opposed to chicanery. Conjuring is a form of legitimate deception that illustrates how readily the mind may be deceived; yet which makes no pretences to being anything other than skillful deception. Modern science has relegated the once popular, pseudo-supernatural black art to the background. Yet popular opinion still resorts spasmodically to superstition, and the world is not yet free of charlatanism. No one who has thoroughly studied the art of conjuring can be deceived by the bold claim and false pretences of self-claimed wonder workers. Modern magic, as a recognized art and science, is continually at war with the survivals of mediaeval necromancy.

Legerdemain has been an active agency in the progress of civilization, and if its present popularity continues, the years to come will see new and astounding developments in the art of legitimate mystery, coincident with the final annihilation of all surviving forms of ancient sorcery and superstition.

The Art of Misdirection

THE EYE IS QUICKER THAN THE HAND.

That is a singular statement! The old saying: “The quickness of the hand deceives the eye” has persisted for many generations. It is almost proverbial in its nature, and nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of a thousand accept it as a recognized fact. Yet it is an absolute fallacy. The statement at the beginning of this page is the true one.

Every one who knows nothing about the art of magic labors under the delusion that rapid digital motions are the conjurer’s greatest aid. Such is not the case. Speed does not conceal the magician’s methods; on the contrary, it is apt to disclose them.

As far as mystification is concerned, the quickness of the hand may confuse the eye; but it will not deceive it. Rapid motions of the hands excite suspicion; they are an indication that some bit of trickery is under way, and they destroy the magical effect which the prestidigitator is seeking to create. The skilled magician resorts to subtle manœuvres, executed at psychological moments, so that his audience suspects nothing. He avoids haste, and seeks to perform his necessary deceptions *sub rosa*.

The real secret of the magician’s art is *misdirection*.

Misdirection is a form of mental suggestion; but it is a more active agency than simple suggestion. A well developed magical effect offers various possible solutions, and while the person who witnesses it is closely following a wrong clue, the magician is free to carry out his deceptions; and, at the conclusion of the mystery, the pet theories of

the audience burst like soap bubbles, leaving no apparent explanation of the effect.

In the performance of pure sleight of hand, digital dexterity is quite necessary; but it is of no value without the use of misdirection. For example, the magician takes a small ball, and pretends to pass it from his right hand to his left. The receiving motion of his left hand, the glance of his eyes, the words he is speaking, all create the impression that the ball is actually in the left hand. At the proper moment, the left hand is shown empty. There is a moment of bewilderment on the part of the audience. The magician takes advantage of it. He strokes his left hand with his right, then turns the back of the left hand towards the audience, to show that the ball is not there. Then suspicion of the right hand dawns upon the spectators, and as if in answer to their mental question, the conjurer calmly shows his right hand—empty! For in stroking his left hand, he has artfully left the ball in the left palm, which is now away from the audience.

While suspicion is reverting to the left hand, the magician again strokes it, bringing the ball to the right palm; then he shows the left hand entirely empty; and before the spectators can regain their equilibrium and again start on their mental pursuit of the elusive ball, the missing object suddenly appears at the finger-tips of the magician's right hand.

Every movement of the hands is executed without undue haste. Every transfer of the ball is *completely covered* so that it cannot be observed. The hands must be well trained; the actions must be properly timed; but no matter how quickly the movements were executed, the eye could glimpse the ball if it were not entirely hidden at every phase of the manipulation.

In sleight of hand, misdirection is of a *momentary* type. One gentle suggestion follows another, each possessing sufficient power to momentarily carry the minds of the audience along a side-track. In

mechanical tricks, *continued* misdirection is frequently employed. The mind may be guided into a long channel of reasoning that finally proves to be entirely wrong.

Many excellent effects may be performed by simple methods that require less than ordinary skill, thanks to the power of misdirection. Each trick is composed of skill and misdirection; and the amount of necessary skill is in inverse ratio to the required quantity of misdirection. When mechanical methods are introduced, they share the burden, sometimes eliminating skill almost entirely, and simplifying the process of misdirection. But misdirection still remains as the great underlying principle of legerdemain. It is within the reach of every one, and the practice of it continually produces greater proficiency.

A conjurer may describe a new creation in mystery to a brother magician. The listener may be unimpressed by the account of a new sleight or a clever mechanical contrivance; but when he hears the phrase: "The misdirection is perfect," he sits up and takes notice. Misdirection is the *sine qua non* of conjuring.

The late Harry Kellar, one of the greatest magicians who ever lived, was unable to perform some of the simplest movements of sleight of hand. He invented mechanical contrivances to take their place, and employed the art of misdirection to such a high degree that no one suspected their existence, and the public regarded him as a master of manipulation.

Kellar once said: "If I can get a man's attention as he stands before me, a herd of elephants, preceded by a brass band in red uniforms can march behind my back, and he will not be aware of it."

That sounds like a stretch of the imagination. Yet Kellar, with the eyes of three thousand people upon him, could take a hollow cone, three feet long, and, with its aid, purloin a fair-sized rose-bush from in back of a table with draperies reaching almost to the floor; and then

repeat the operation with another rose-bush, without a single member of the audience discovering the secret of the trick. So skilled was he in that particular production that magicians, who knew the secret of the mystery, and who had seen Kellar perform it a dozen times, could not catch him in the act!

It was all due to the art of misdirection. While it is doubtful that any other man will ever reach the heights attained by Kellar, his example stands as a proof of what can be done; and it is within the powers of every one to attain a degree of proficiency in the art.

The fascination of magic lies in the fact that the best lessons are practical experience. While the student is practicing simple sleights, and training himself in the tricks that require exact methods, he can put his knowledge to a practical use by mystifying his friends with simple tricks with common objects. He can begin his career as an amateur magician after an hour's practice, and he can go just as far in his studies as he desires. He may add to his repertoire the effects that appeal to him, and he can gain a reputation as a skilled conjurer merely by the constant performing of tricks that do not require skill, yet which will perfect themselves as he performs them.

But he must remember that misdirection is his great weapon. Through its aid, apparent miracles may be accomplished. Remember these admonitions: Never show a trick apologetically. Present it as though it were a genuine mystery. Never repeat a trick before the same group of people on the same occasion, unless you have more than one method of doing it. Even if you can "get away with it," the element of surprise will be missing, and the mystery will be flat. Never explain how a trick is done except to some one who really wants to learn it, and who you are sure will keep the secret. Curiosity-seekers must be kept in the dark; for they cannot resist the temptation to babble. When you have mastered a good trick, try to learn a similar mystery, accomplished by a different method, so that they may be used in-

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terchangeably. Introduce mystic passes, cabalistic words, and little quips with your tricks. They all will aid in the creation of misdirection. A man may know how a trick is done, but he may not know how to do it. So practice every trick that you learn to find out if you really can properly present it.

The old statement: “The quickness of the hand deceives the eye,” and the familiar saying, “up his sleeve” are in themselves forms of misdirection. This chapter has blasted the former statement, and the latter is just as erroneous. The magician rarely uses his sleeve for anything smaller than a birdcage or a flower bush. That sounds ridiculous, but it is true.

“Mundus vult decipi; decipiatur.” (The world wishes to be deceived; let it be deceived.) Remember that ancient saying. Let your audiences believe in their pet theories of quick hands and convenient sleeves, and their dangerous supply of “little knowledge” will work to your advantage.

Classes of Magic

"THERE ARE TWO SIDES to every story," and as every magical effect is a visual story, there are, therefore, two sides to every trick. One is the viewpoint of the audience; the other is the secret knowledge of the magician.

From the standpoint of magic as it appears to the audience, there are three classes of conjuring: impromptu, platform, and stage. In performing impromptu magic, the conjurer must be able to work under exacting conditions, with people close about him; and he must either use tricks with common objects, or he must employ apparatus that will stand the closest inspection.

Platform magic covers a wide range. The amateur magician who sets up his appliances in the corner of a parlor, and gives a brief entertainment to an established audience of ten or twelve persons is presenting a modified platform performance. Strictly speaking, he is a drawing-room entertainer; but, in setting an imaginary line between himself and the audience, he is placing himself in the same class as the magician who appears in a club-room, or on a platform in a church. The apparatus used in some of his effects must be subjected to examination by members of the audience, and the magician must frequently come in close contact with the spectators.

In stage magic, larger apparatus is required; sleight of hand is restricted because of the small size of the objects used, and very few particles should be passed for examination. In fact, the performer should avoid going into the audience, except on very special occasions.

There are no exact dividing lines between these three groups. The impromptu entertainer may encounter circumstances under which his conjuring takes on the aspect of a miniature platform performance, and likewise the platform entertainer may sometimes meet with conditions that resemble stage work. The platform magician must have a very flexible repertoire of effects, for he may be called upon to display his skill under very difficult conditions, which often involve work at close quarters.

From the standpoint of the magician, there are three types of tricks: tricks depending upon sleight of hand, tricks requiring auxiliary appliances, and tricks with apparatus. The first section of this volume deals with tricks requiring neither sleight of hand, nor apparatus. Strictly speaking, practically every trick requires skill or appliances, but frequently both of these items are so slightly necessary that they are almost negligible quantities. Tricks without sleight of hand or apparatus belong chiefly to the impromptu class. Sleight of hand finds its best medium of exhibition in platform entertainments; while apparatus forms the backbone of stage conjuring.

Thus the student of magic should begin first with impromptu tricks. He may learn the principles of misdirection and acquire self-confidence without lengthy practice or the expenditure of cash. After his preliminary experiments, he may choose his further course for himself, practicing sleight of hand if he desires, or constructing and investing in apparatus if that style of magic seems more suited to his inclinations. Perhaps the best plan is to combine the two methods of conjuring, and pass from one to the other as occasion requires.

Magic has its theory, as well as its practice, but the theory is of a practical nature. The chapter on "Misdirection" has covered the essential points of this practical theory. But there is one important guide in the study of magical methods, which will be found in the following paragraphs.

Remember that the aim of a magician is to mystify his audience. Some persons say he should entertain, as well as mystify. That is an unnecessary elaboration. If the magician is a successful mystifier, his performance will be entertaining. The audience wants to see tricks performed; the people do not care if the effects they witness are the magician's own creations; they are impressed by the merits of the tricks as they are demonstrated.

There are three types of genius in magic: the creative, the constructive, and the demonstrative. One man thinks of a clever deception, a second person works out a way to perform it, and a third "puts it across." The last phase is the only one that interests the spectator. There are plenty of good tricks now in existence, and the student of magic can best devote his time to perfecting present methods rather than endeavoring to create new effects.

The late Nevil Maskelyne, in his excellent description of the "Art of Magic," casts discredit upon the "copyist" who does not employ originality in his magical effects. Maskelyne compares magic with painting, and states that a true artist originates his ideas, and that while an inferior artist may copy the works of old masters, the true art lies in the execution of the originals.

Such an analogy is erroneous. As an art, magic has nothing in common with painting. Its real parallels are found in music and in drama. The public does not expect a great singer to write his own songs and make his own musical instruments. It gives its greatest acclaim to the tragedian who can enact the principal part in a Shakespearean play, following the same lines that hundreds of other actors have done before him. The age of a song, or the age of a play frequently adds to its value. The aim of the singer or the actor is to sing his song or play his role *more perfectly* than any one else has ever sung or played it.

So it should be with the magician. Let him perform old tricks; let

him follow recognized routines; let him use familiar “patter,” which is of proven worth; as Houdin has said, the magician is an *actor playing the part of a magician*, and his object is to perform his role as skillfully as possible. If a magical effect, as it now exists, with its artifices, and its cleverly-developed line of talk, is suited to an individual’s ability, he should not seek to vary it, but should apply every effort to perfecting it without further embellishment. Nothing can be gained by endeavoring to whitewash a spotless lily.

In describing the tricks and illusions contained in this book, the author has explained practical working methods that have been perfected by various experimenters. After the budding magician has become proficient in performing these magical effects, he may, possibly, evolve certain improvements in their *modus operandi*. But unless he discovers an exceptionally clever variation of a particular trick, his best course is to adhere to the recognized routine that has been productive of real results. Always remember that the magician’s purpose is to thoroughly mystify his audience, and experimental measures frequently detract from the desired effect.

SECTION I

**Tricks Without Sleight of
Hand or Apparatus**

Tricks Without Sleight of Hand or Apparatus

SINCE WE HAVE LEARNED that misdirection is the essential requisite of every mystery, it follows that sleight of hand and special appliances are merely mechanical elements in conjuring.

Every person has at his disposal the means of performing impromptu problems in magic. Skill and long practice are not necessary, and mechanical contrivances are not needed.

The present section deals with this type of conjuring. The chapters are composed of various tricks with common objects. The beginner should not necessarily try to learn all the tricks in any particular chapter. His best plan is to experiment with the items that most appeal to him, and thus gradually gain a respectable repertoire of worth-while magical effects, which he can capably perform.

CHAPTER I

Tricks with Pencil, Paper, and Figures

TRICKS WITH FIGURES ARE ALWAYS GOOD for the beginner. No one can experience difficulty in propounding a mental calculation for the benefit of his friends. Yet problems with figures frequently prove to be perplexing mysteries, and they clearly demonstrate how easily a person may be mystified.

Most figuring tricks require a paper and pencil. So tricks with paper and pencil naturally fit in with figure problems, and may be worked well in connection with them.

1. The Mental Number

There are several methods of discovering a number thought of by a person, through the process of a mental calculation; so we will limit the description to the most effective method.

The magician tells a person to think of a number, double it, add ten, and divide the total by two. Then the magician asks the result, and he immediately names the original number.

The original number will always be *five less* than the total. For example:

Think of a number	6
Double it	12
Add 10.	22
Divide by 2.	11

The magician mentally subtracts 5—6.

The process is simple. The doubling is offset by the division by two. The interposed addition of ten conceals this fact; and the division by two also cuts the interposed ten in half, thus making the result greater by five than the original number. If the person is told to add twelve, instead of ten, the result will be six greater than the original number. If eighteen is added, the result will be greater by nine. Any even number may be added on instead of ten, and the final difference will be half of that number.

2. His Favorite Figure

The magician writes down the following figures, to form a long number: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9. Then he asks some one which is his favorite figure. Suppose the person says 4. The magician tells him to multiply the long number by 36. He does so, thus:

$$\begin{array}{r} 1\ 2\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 6\ 7\ 9 \\ \times\ 3\ 6 \\ \hline 7\ 4\ 0\ 7\ 4\ 0\ 7\ 4 \\ 3\ 7\ 0\ 3\ 7\ 0\ 3\ 7 \\ \hline 4\ 4\ 4\ 4\ 4\ 4\ 4\ 4\ 4 \end{array}$$

Every figure is the person’s favorite figure!

The secret is simply this: when a figure is named by a person, mentally multiply that figure by 9. Then tell the spectator to multiply the original row of figures by that number. For example: if 6 is chosen, give 54 as the multiplier, as 54 is 9 × 6. If 9 is chosen, 81 should be the multiplier.

3. Radio Telepathy

The author was the first person to broadcast tricks by radio. Early in 1923, he sent out the following trick by wireless, from Station WIP, in Philadelphia, calling it "Radio Telepathy."

Let a person take a paper and pencil, and write down a number of three figures, the figures being different. For example: 5 6 8.

Tell him to reverse the number and to subtract the smaller from the larger.

$$\begin{array}{r} 8\ 6\ 5 \\ -\ 5\ 6\ 8 \\ \hline 2\ 9\ 7 \end{array}$$

Then he must reverse the sum and add on the new number thus formed:

$$\begin{array}{r} 2\ 9\ 7 \\ +\ 7\ 9\ 2 \\ \hline 1\ 0\ 8\ 9 \end{array}$$

As soon as he has completed the process, you tell him the total—1089, although you have not seen what he has written!

Surprising though it may seem, the total will always be 1089, no matter what figures may have been selected! The person doing the sum should be cautioned, however, that if his subtraction comes to less than 100, he must use a cipher in front of it, thus maintaining three figures. For example:

$$\begin{array}{r} 2\ 3\ 1 \\ -\ 1\ 3\ 2 \\ \hline 0\ 9\ 9 \\ +\ 9\ 9\ 0 \\ \hline 1\ 0\ 8\ 9 \end{array}$$

This trick was admirably suited for the radio, for every one of the thousands trying it had the same answer. The total 1089 was given after time had been allowed for every one to obtain a total.

4. A Written Addition

The magician writes a number on a slip of paper and seals it in an envelope. He asks for various figures, and as they are given, he writes them in a column on the face of the envelope. When the last figure is written, the magician puts his initials on the envelope, and hands it to a person, who shall add the column of figures. Suppose the total is 38. When the envelope is opened, the paper inside bears the number 38!

The secret: The magician adds the figures mentally as they are given to him. As soon as the total has reached 29 or more, he says “Stop.” Then he writes his initials on the envelope, and draws a line under the column. But in so doing, he calmly adds another figure to the bottom of the column, bringing the total to 38!

For example:

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \\ 7 \\ 4 \\ 1 \\ 7 \\ 6\text{ (Say stop)} \\ 4\text{ (Write this figure)} \\ \hline \text{(Total 38)} \end{array}$$

There is another way of performing this trick. A large number (say 859) is written on a slip and placed in an envelope. The magician has a small pad, which has no cardboard backing. On the lower side of the bottom sheet he has written:

$$\begin{array}{r} 4\ 3\ 2 \\ 1\ 8\ 3 \\ \hline 2\ 4\ 4 \end{array}$$

He lets a person write three figures on the top sheet of the pad. Another person writes three figures under them; a third person writes three more figures. Naturally these three numbers do not total 859. But as the magician walks to a fourth person, he accidentally (?) drops the pencil. As he stoops to pick it up, he turns over the pad, and tears off the bottom sheet, giving it to the fourth person with the pencil, asking him to add the column. Naturally the total will be 859. The magician pockets the pad, and while the envelope is being opened, he takes the added sheet from the fourth person, so that no one may learn of the ingenious substitution.

5. The Counting Race

The magician offers to race a person counting to 100, under the following conditions. One shall name a number not greater than ten. Then his opponent shall add on another number, not greater than ten, and this procedure is continued, until one person—the magician or his opponent, shall reach the goal of 100.

The plan sounds fair enough, but the magician wins every race! For example, the race may proceed as follows, the numbers in italics being those added on by the magician: 6, 13, *15*, 21, 28, *33*, 36, 42, *45*, 55, *56*, 64, *67*, 74, 78, 80, *89*, 91, 100.

Here is the secret of success: The number 100 is controlled by 89,

which in turn is controlled by 78. Thus there are a series of “key numbers” which control the result. They are 1, 12, 23, 34, 45, 56, 67, 78, and 89. By only striking those numbers, the magician is assured of success. If he names the first number, he can begin with 1, and it will be impossible for him to lose.

However, in actual practice, it is best not to consider the “key numbers” until the race has progressed to about 50.

The trick may be varied, the performer guaranteeing to make his opponent win. In this case, the “key numbers” are 11, 22, 33, 44, 55, 66, 77, 88, and 99. By reaching 99, the magician forces his opponent to name 100, or more.

6. Mystic Number Nine

There are many tricks with the number nine. This is probably the best one. Tell a person to write down a number of seven or eight figures. Then he must add the total of the figures, and subtract the new number from the long original number, thus:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 3\ 8\ 4\ 6\ 6\ 7\ 2\ 1\ \text{(original number)} \\
 -\ 37\ \text{(Total of figures)} \\
 \hline
 3\ 8\ 4\ 6\ 6\ 6\ 8\ 4
 \end{array}$$

Then the person writes down all the figures of the new number, *except one*. We will suppose he eliminates the figure 3. He hands the magician a paper slip bearing the figures 8 4 6 6 6 8 4. The magician promptly names 3 as the missing figure.

This trick depends upon the fact that after the subtraction, the *sum of the figures* will always total a multiple of nine. Thus the figures in 38466684 total 45. When the magician adds up the figures given to him, he will only total 42, as the figure 3 is missing. As 45 is the multiple of 9 next above 42, he knows that 3 is the missing number.

An important point to remember is that if the figures given the magician total a multiple of nine, either 0 or 9 has been eliminated. The magician is prepared for this emergency. He puts his answer in the form of a question. He says:

“Did you cross out a cipher?”

If the answer is “yes,” the trick is done, and the magician says:

“I knew it!”

If, however, the answer is in the negative, he says:

“I didn’t think you did, but I meant to tell you about it. Zero is not, strictly speaking, a figure, so I should have told you not to eliminate a cipher. As for the figure you *did* cross out, I have a mental impression that it was the figure nine!”

7. Seven Pellets

Seven paper pellets are laid on the table. The magician picks them up one at a time, taking them alternately with each hand. Then, alternately again, he replaces five of the pellets on the table, leaving two pellets—one in each hand.

He picks up the five pellets alternately, and then replaces three of them on the table. That leaves four pellets—two in each hand. So each hand picks up a pellet from the table and the magician announces that he has three pellets in each hand. Yet when he opens his hands, his left hand contains just one pellet, while there are five pellets in his right hand!

The trick is successful because an odd number of pellets are used. With an even number, matters would be different. The right hand is always the first to pick up a pellet, but in laying down the pellets, the left hand takes precedence.

Thus, when the seven pellets are picked up there will be four in the right and three in the left. The left begins by laying down a pellet, then the right, left, right, left. That leaves two pellets in the right

hand and none in the left. People think that each hand holds one.

In picking up the five pellets, the right hand begins, which results in five pellets in the right hand against two in the left. In laying down three, it is done left, right, left; then when each hand picks up a pellet the count will be five to one in favor of the right hand.

The hands should be kept closed during the operations.

8. The Spirit Message

The following trick was originated by the author in 1921, and its secret was known to very few persons. It has been improved since then, into a more simplified version.

The magician shows a writing pad, and lifting the top sheet, he inserts a piece of carbon paper. He writes a few words, and tearing off the top sheet and removing the carbon, he shows that the words have been reproduced. Then he tears off the sheet that contains the carbon writing.

A carbon paper is inserted under the next sheet, and a person is asked to write a question upon the pad, with his signature at the bottom. This time when the top sheet is torn off and the carbon taken away, the question is not there! Instead, appear the words: "The Spirits say Yes!" and underneath the spirit message appears the person's signature, reproduced in carbon!

To begin with, on the fourth page of the pad, you must write the spirit message through a piece of carbon paper, leaving plenty of space at the bottom.

Three or four sheets of carbon paper are on the table. They are all about the length of the pad, with the exception of one sheet, which is about one-third longer, but the extra length is carefully folded under, so it cannot be seen, and the carbon paper looks like the others.

An ordinary sheet of carbon paper is placed between the first two sheets, when the first writing is made. Then the two sheets are torn

off, and the prepared sheet of the pad is now second from the top. Lift the top sheet slightly, and insert the prepared piece of carbon paper, folded edge upward. Tell a person to write his question at the top of the pad. Naturally his writing is not reproduced, due to the folded back layer of carbon paper, which absorbs the impression. But when he signs his name, at the bottom, there is only a single layer of carbon beneath, and thus the signature is reproduced on the second sheet of the pad.

Tear off the top sheet of the pad, remove the carbon, and casually pocket it, or fold it up with the other carbon papers. Every one will be astonished at the writing on the second sheet of the pad.

CHAPTER II

Magic with a Match-Box

A BOX OF MATCHES provides the nucleus for a great many effective and interesting impromptu tricks. Not only are the matches themselves used in many entertaining deceptions, but the match-box is also adaptable.

Certain match tricks are scarcely more than puzzles. A few of these perplexities have been incorporated in the present chapter, but, for the great part, the tricks are surprising, startling feats that may be worked into very mysterious effects.

1. Finding the Heads

The magician borrows a box of matches, looks at it for a moment, then lays it on the table, and points to one end.

“There,” he says, “you will find the heads.”

When the box of matches is opened, the heads are seen to be at the end designated by the magician!

When the magician takes the box of matches, he receives it with his right hand, and momentarily sets the box upon his left forefinger, which is held horizontally. He balances the box there for just an instant, but that is long enough for him to notice which way the box topples. That will be the end of the box where the heads lie: for the heads are heavier than the other ends of the matches.

2. Magnetic Matches

The magician opens a box of matches part way, and shows that the

drawer is filled with matches. He turns the box upside down, and removes the drawer. The matches do not fall; they remain in the drawer as though magnetized, until, at the magician's command, they fall on the table. The box and drawer may then be examined.

The trick depends upon a broken match, which is just long enough to go across the drawer. This match is wedged across the drawer above the loose matches. When the drawer is partly opened, it is not seen.

But when the drawer is drawn out upside down, the matches do not fall, because they are supported by the cross-match. At the right instant, the magician inserts his finger-tip under the drawer, and touches the cross-match. This releases it, and all the matches fall to the table, the short one being buried beneath them.

Sometimes pressure on the sides of the drawer is sufficient to release the cross-match.

3. The Balanced Match-Boxes

Balancing three or four match-boxes, one on top of the other, appears to be a feat of real skill, especially as they can be swung around at very dangerous angles.

The method, however, is simple, but effective. In setting the match-boxes end on end, push in the drawer of the uppermost box, each time another box is added. This causes the boxes to become locked. The drawer that extends at the bottom is hidden by the hand that holds the boxes. When the boxes are thrown on the floor, at the conclusion of the "balancing," they will fly apart. It is not necessary to push each drawer very far.

4. Topsyturvy Matches

The magician opens the box of matches and shows the heads at one end. He closes the box and shows the blank ends at the other extremity of the box.

When he reopens the box, the matches have apparently turned around, for the heads appear at the wrong end! He closes the box, and the heads appear at the other end! He opens either end of the box, and finds heads or blanks, just as he desires.

A small fake is necessary for this trick, but it is a simple little affair that can easily be made.

Take a row of matches from a box. Cut them across the center, and glue the head ends to a piece of thin wood, cardboard, or leather.

Place the little contrivance in a half-filled box of matches, but turn it so that the head end is opposite the heads of the genuine matches.

Now by tilting the box so that the fake slides to the blank ends of the matches, you can open the upper end of the box and show the genuine heads. If you open the box at the lower end, heads will be seen there also! If you tilt the box, the fake will slide to the head end, and you will have blanks at ends.

The trick can be worked up to suit the individual taste. At the conclusion, however, the box should be turned upside down, and the drawer pushed half way open. This will let the fake slide into the fingers, which can pocket it, while the box is tossed on the table.

5. Smash It!

This is an interesting experiment with a matchbox.

Remove the drawer, set the cover on its side, and place the drawer on end, upon the side of the cover.

Now ask some powerful person to smash the drawer and the cover with a blow of his fist.

The harder he strikes, the less chance he has of success! The cover and the drawer will fly away from his hand as soon as he strikes them.

6. Striking Safety Matches

A trick that is *always* surprising is when the magician nonchalantly

strikes a safety match on the sole of his shoe. People who attempt to duplicate the feat are always unsuccessful.

Here is the secret: Beforehand, rub the side of a match-box against the instep of your shoe. Some of the striking substance will be transferred from the box to your shoe, and it will be a simple matter for you to strike a match there. The substance will not wear off for some time.

7. Picking Up the Drawer

Another trick with the drawer and the cover of a match-box. Lay the drawer upside down upon the table, and set the cover on end upon it. The trick is to pick up the cover and lift the drawer with it—without touching the drawer!

To do this one, place your lips to the upper end of the cover, and lift it, at the same time drawing in your breath. The suction will lift the drawer also.

8. A Magic Blow Out

The magician holds a lighted match in his right hand. He blows up his left sleeve, and out goes the match! This is a very amusing trick.

Note carefully how the match must be held. It is gripped between the uppermost joints of the first and second fingers of the right hand.



The lighted end extends in *back* of the hand, and about an eighth of an inch of the match extends inwards, from the fingertips.

The tip of the right thumb is pressed against the end of the match, and gives the end a sharp snap. The fingers hold tightly to the match, and the sudden snap puts the light out!

This trick must be practiced, and when the knack is acquired, it will be very effective. The magician snaps the match just as he blows up the left sleeve, and the match goes out without any apparent cause, other than the blowing.

9. The Box on the Door

This is a curious novelty. A borrowed match-box is set against the end of a door, and it hangs there, half opened and full of matches, just as though it were in a holder.

This is accomplished by pushing the box up along the door. After two or three pushes, the match-box will stick in place, sometimes so firmly that a match may be struck upon the side of it.

A wooden box of safety matches should be used.

10. Label Up!

The magician tosses a box of matches in the air. It falls with the label-side up.

Every time the box is spun, it falls the same way.

Simply insert a coin—a quarter or a half dollar—under the drawer of the match-box. It adds weight to the bottom of the box, so that when the box is whirled in air it will always come with the bottom down.

11. The Jumping Match

The magician holds a match by the center, and places the head end on the table. The match is held between the thumb and forefinger, and another match is laid across it.

Suddenly the loose match jumps high in the air! This is repeated, with the same result.

The motive power is supplied by the third finger of the hand that holds the match. A sharp snap against the inner end of the match does



the trick. With a little practice, the loose match can be hurled several feet, although there is apparently no motion on the part of the match in the hand.

This trick is very effective when performed with long wooden jack-straws. It is easier to work than with matches.

CHAPTER III

Simple Coin Tricks

THERE ARE MANY COIN TRICKS which may be performed with little or no skill, and the majority of them require coins of small size. There are, perhaps, twenty methods by which the vanishing of a coin may be accomplished, but many of them, while easy of execution, are inferior in effect. The purpose of the present chapter is to explain the best methods of presenting simple, but effective tricks with coins, and the beginner should not be burdened with a great variety of methods which will never prove of practical use.

1. A Simple Coin Vanish

This is, perhaps, the easiest method of vanishing a small coin. The magician takes three or four coins from his pocket, and places them on the palm of his left hand. He selects one of the coins, and removes it with his right hand, while the left drops the remaining coins back in the pocket. The right hand squeezes its coin—and it vanishes, leaving no trace whatsoever.

When the magician apparently removes the small coin from his left hand, he does not really take the coin away. Instead, the fingers of the right hand, which temporarily cover the coins, slide a large coin—say a half dollar—over a small coin which has been selected. Then the right hand moves away, closed, as if it held the small coin. The spectators observe the coins that remain in the left hand, and they notice that the small coin is missing. Obviously it is in the right hand. Hence the

disappearance of the coin from the right hand is a real mystery, and the chosen coin drops in the pocket along with its companions.

2. Vanishing Coin and Match-Box

The magician spins a coin upon the table, and, to stop its spinning, he strikes it with a wooden match-box, which has been placed near by. When he lifts the match-box, the coin has disappeared.

The match-box is empty, and the drawer has been inserted upside down. When the magician brings the bottom of the box down upon the edge of the spinning coin, the coin is driven right through the wood and into the match-box. This sounds almost unbelievable, but in practice, it works to perfection, and no one ever suspects that the coin has gone into the match-box. Occasionally the coin is not "picked up," on the first blow, but that only adds to the final effect, when the match-box is brought down upon it the second time. The magician should quietly pocket the match-box, and if he wishes, he may have a duplicate box in his pocket, which he casually brings out instead of the original box.

A dime is the best coin to use. A neat effect is gained by spinning the coin on a plate, beneath which a duplicate dime is hidden. After the coin has disappeared, the magician picks up the plate and reveals the second dime—which is, apparently, the original coin, driven right through the plate!

3. The Coin Fold

This is a very valuable method of vanishing a coin, as it leaves the coin in the magician's possession, while the spectators believe it is elsewhere. Thus it serves well in combination tricks, which will be explained later.

The magician takes a piece of paper, about four inches square, and lays a coin in the center. He folds over one-third of the paper from the

right, and then one-third from the left, thus enclosing the coin in a flat paper tube. He holds the bottom of the tube with his left thumb and fingers, while the right fingers fold down the top third of the paper tube.

At this point, the left fingers, which are holding the coin through the paper, are relaxed. The coin, unobserved by the audience, slides down the tube, and into the magician's left hand, which is held like a cup. The right fingers immediately fold up the bottom third of the tube, and the right hand deposits the little package on the table, or in a glass. No "palming" or other skill is required to hold the coin concealed in the left hand, as it remains there naturally. Every one thinks the coin is in the folded paper, and there is plenty of opportunity for the left hand to dispose of it, when the magician turns around for a moment. The paper is subsequently torn to pieces, proving that the coin has vanished.

4. The Improved Coin Fold

In this form of the coin fold, the coin is actually wrapped up in the piece of paper, which may be struck against the side of a glass, to show that the coin is really there. Nevertheless, the coin disappears.

In this instance, the magician uses a square piece of newspaper, with a column running up the center, the left edge of the column being a third of the way across the paper. In the center of the line that forms the margin of the column, he cuts a slit, which is just large enough to admit the passage of the coin, and he makes a crease along that line. When the paper is exhibited, the narrow slit is not noticed; and the coin is fairly folded inside the paper. Having proven that the coin is safely inside, the magician takes the folded paper between his left thumb and fingers, with the slit down, pressing the coin through the paper. Then the right hand takes the paper, and at that moment, the left fingers release pressure, and the coin drops into the left hand. The

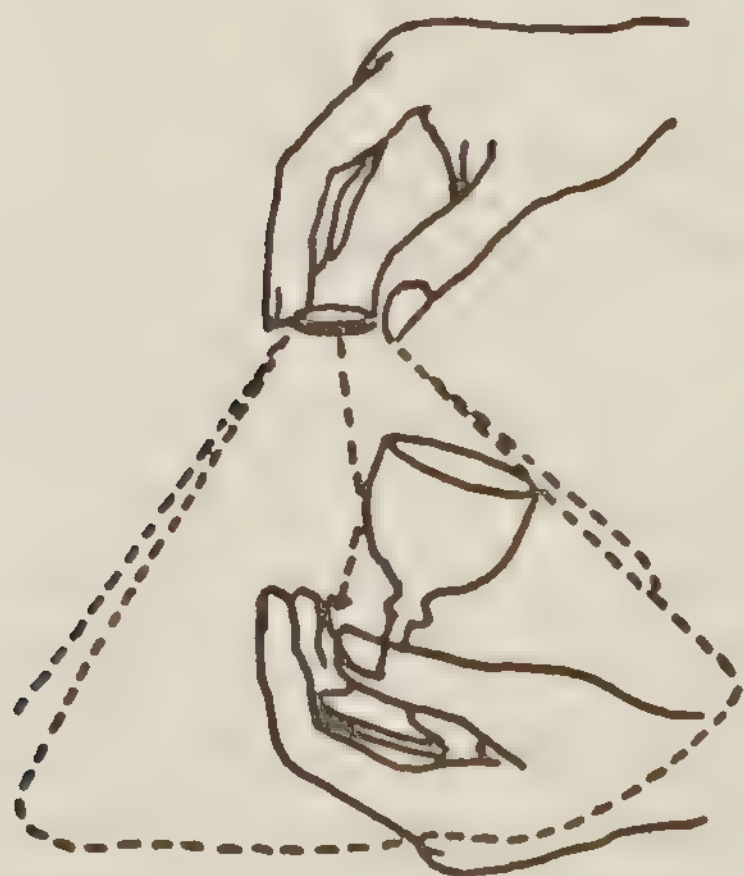
paper is laid in full view, and when it is torn up to show that the coin has vanished, the slit is, of course, destroyed.

5. The Coin in the Goblet

This is an excellent method of vanishing a quarter or a half-dollar. It is very ingenious in its operation.

The magician holds a small goblet in his left hand. He borrows a coin, and has it placed in the center of a handkerchief. Then he holds the coin over the goblet, and under cover of the cloth, he drops the coin. Every one hears it fall into the goblet. Then a rubber band is placed over the mouth of the goblet, holding the handkerchief safely in position. A spectator takes the goblet, and when the handkerchief is removed, the coin has gone!

At the outset, the foot of the goblet is resting on the palm of the left hand. As soon as the handkerchief is held over the goblet, so that the latter is concealed from view, the tips of the left fingers are tilted upward, so that the goblet is at an angle, instead of being perpendicular. When the right hand drops the coin, it does not fall into the glass, but strikes the outside of the glass, and falls against the foot of the goblet, in the magician's left hand. The sound is precisely the same as if the coin had actually fallen inside of the goblet.



The coin strikes the side of the goblet and falls into the left hand.

The left hand immediately tilts the goblet to an upright position. The coin is resting upon the left fingers, which grip it, and carry it away, the right hand holding the goblet. The left hand goes to the vest pocket to

obtain a rubber band, and the coin is left in the pocket. Then the band is affixed about the mouth of the goblet, holding the handkerchief in place, and, in due time, the handkerchief is removed.

There is an older method of accomplishing this same effect. A glass disc, the size and shape of a half-dollar, is previously hidden in the folds of the handkerchief. When the half-dollar is placed beneath the cloth, it is retained in the left hand, and the glass disc is pushed up in the center of the handkerchief. When the glass disc is dropped into the glass, it imitates the sound of a falling half-dollar. There is a little water in the goblet, which causes the disc to adhere to the bottom; so when the handkerchief is removed, the "coin" is not seen in the glass.

6. The Coin in the Match-Box

The mysterious appearance of a coin in an empty match-box is a clever little trick. The box is shown with the drawer half-way open, and it is obviously empty. But when the drawer is closed and reopened, a coin is found inside.

The coin is concealed between the top of the inner end of the drawer and the top of the cover of the box. When the coin is in position, and the drawer is half open, the box appears empty; but as soon as the drawer is pushed shut, the coin falls inside, and the trick is done. This is a good method of reproducing a coin after a duplicate coin has been vanished.

7. The Coin in the Lemon

The magician exhibits an ordinary lemon, and cuts it in half with a knife. Between the two portions of the lemon, a small coin is discovered.

The coin is previously affixed to one side of the knife, by a dab of soft soap. That side of the knife is turned away from the spectators, so the coin is not seen. When the lemon is partially cut, and the knife

withdrawn, the coin remains inside.

This makes a good combination trick. Vanish a *marked* coin by means of the "Coin Fold." Then turn away to a table where you have the knife and the lemon. Secretly stick the marked coin on the knife; bring back the knife and the lemon, and cut the fruit, revealing the coin. Then the folded paper may be torn to show that the coin has actually passed from one place to another.

8. The Coin in the Roll

This is an interesting experiment, which requires a bit of practice. In effect, a roll is broken in half, and a coin is found imbedded in the center.

Have the coin in your left hand. Pick up a roll and show it with the right, and immediately transfer it to the left hand, so that the coin is covered. The fingers of both hands bend up the ends of the roll, and this makes a break in the bottom, through which the fingers force the coin. Then the ends of the roll are bent down, breaking the bread in half, and the coin makes its appearance in the very center of the roll.

9. The Coin Through the Hat

A hat is inverted upon a tumbler, and the magician drops a number of coins into the hat. One of the coins passes right through the crown falling into the tumbler.

The coin is a duplicate, and it is previously wedged between the crown of the hat, and the mouth of the glass. When the coins are dropped, the hidden coin is dislodged, and falls into the tumbler. The fall may be facilitated by slightly lifting the brim of the hat at the proper instant, and the effect is most mysterious.

One coin alone may be used. In this case, the coin will still be in the hat after the duplicate has fallen. But if the hat (which should have a rounded crown) is slowly turned over, the original coin will slide

down behind the inner band, and the hat may be shown empty.

10. Coins Through the Hat

In this new version of the previous trick, the glass is not used. Instead, the hat is held in the left hand, while the right hand drops several coins into the hat. A few of the coins apparently fall through the inverted crown.

The coins that “fall through” are hidden in the bow of ribbon that appears on the outer band of the hat. The left hand picks up the hat, which is crown up, and the forefinger presses on the ribbon, holding the coins in place. Then the hat is inverted, and the right hand drops in some coins. At the same instant, the left forefinger releases its coins, and they fall. The bow side of the hat should be away from the audience.

11. Coin, Hat and Glass

This is a juggling feat that has a trick to it, and it is a very puzzling problem.

A glass is set on the table. The side of a hat is rested upon the glass, and on the other side of the hat, directly above the glass, a coin is placed.

The magician strikes the hat, knocking it away, and the coin falls straight into the glass. It looks simple, but when other people try it they fail.

Here is the secret. The crown of the hat is towards the audience. The magician swings his hand and pretends that he is going to hit the end of the brim, as he comes to it. Instead, he passes the tip of the brim, and catches the hat inside, virtually *pulling the hat out from beneath the coin*. Of course he lets the hat fall, and to all appearances he has *knocked* the hat from its position. So when other persons try the trick, they knock the hat, and it bounds away, carrying the coin with it.

12. The Balanced Coin

This is a very pretty mystery. The magician holds his right hand, palm upwards, and sets a half-dollar upright upon his knuckles. The coin remains there, balanced, and at the magician's command, it slowly sinks down until it lies flat on the hand.

A short pin is required for the trick. The head of the pin is gripped between the magician's knuckles, with the point projecting in. The back of the hand is shown, and the left hand brings the coin over, and as the right hand is turned palm up, the left is already placing the coin in position, thus concealing the pin.

The coin is leaned against the pin, and thus it balances, upright. When the pressure of the knuckles is very slightly released, the weight of the coin causes it to sink flat on to the fingers. Then the left hand picks up the coin, and at the same instant, the right hand is dropped to the side. The fingers are opened, and the coin falls, unobserved, upon the floor.

13. Coin Balanced on Knife

Another version of the "Balancing Coin." A half-dollar is set on the edge of a knife, and it balances there!

Take a quarter, and stick it on to the half-dollar, by means of a small dab of soap. Keep the quarter side of the half-dollar away from the audience. The knife is held, blade horizontal, by the right hand, and the left hand sets the coins upon the blade, the quarter resting on the edge of the blade. The knife is tilted slightly backwards, and the half-dollar appears to be balanced on the blade.

When the coins are removed, the quarter is retained in the hand while the half-dollar is tossed on the table.

14. Always Heads

This trick requires some practice, as a certain knack is required; yet it is

not, strictly speaking, a demonstration of sleight of hand.

The magician spins a coin in the air, and catches it in his hand. It always falls heads. Or he can make it fall tails, if he wishes; but he can always state beforehand how it will fall.

The trick depends upon a remarkable optical illusion. Take a quarter or a half-dollar, rest the coin head up on the tips of your thumb and forefinger, and toss it in the air. Naturally the coin will not revolve, and it will fall in your hand, head up. Repeat the movement, but by pressing slightly upon the coin with the forefinger, give the coin a slight eccentric motion, so that it wobbles, but does not revolve. After a few attempts, you will be surprised to observe that the coin *apparently spins*; yet in reality it does not. After you have acquired the necessary knack, you can apparently spin a coin heads or tails whenever you wish.

15. The Coin in the Box

For this trick you require a small cylindrical box, of the type which contains half-inch adhesive tape. A penny is placed in the box, and you may shake the box to show that the penny turns inside, so that it may fall either heads or tails.

A penny is placed in the box, the lid is on, and a person may shake the box to his heart's content; yet you can tell whether the coin lies head up or tail up! When the cover is removed, your guess is found to be correct.

The secret is quite subtle. When the cover is tight on the box, the penny cannot turn inside, so you have merely to note how the coin lies when it is placed in the box, and it will be the same when the cover is removed, no matter how much shaking has been given to the box.

But when you first demonstrate the trick, put the cover on *loosely*, and there will be just enough room for the coin to revolve, so you can casually show that the coin actually turns in the box.

16. The Vanishing Dime

This is a new trick, and it is very mystifying.

A dime is placed between two half-dollars, and the three coins are held by the magician, between the tips of his thumb and forefinger (right). He lets the lower half-dollar fall to his left hand. Then he drops the upper half-dollar. The dime has disappeared!

He takes one half-dollar in each hand, and spins each coin in the air. No trace remains of the dime. The hands are absolutely empty. Yet when he puts the two half-dollars together, with a space between them, the dime reappears! The upper half-dollar is lifted, and there is the dime!

Read the following carefully, and you will appreciate the merits of this excellent impromptu coin trick.

We will call the half-dollars A and B. To one side of A, a tiny dab of soft soap¹ is affixed. That side of A is kept downward.

The dime is placed upon B, which is held horizontally between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. Then A is set above the dime, and is pressed against it, so that the dime adheres to A.

The three coins are turned over, so that A is underneath, and they are still held between the thumb and forefinger. A is allowed to fall; the added weight of the dime causes it to turn over in its fall, so that when it lands on the left hand, the dime is hidden beneath A. Then B is dropped alongside of A. The dime has disappeared.

Showing his right hand empty, the magician picks up B, and spins it, replacing it on his left hand. Then he picks up A, and also twirls it in the air. The dime cannot be seen. It sticks to A as it spins in the air, and the dime side of A falls downward in the right hand, due to the weight. A is picked up, with the dime down, and B is placed upon it. Then B is placed beneath A, bringing the dime between them, and the

¹Instead of soap, bees-wax, or lead plaster may be used. The last named is the most satisfactory. A very small dab suffices.

coins are turned over (bringing B up), and held in the original position. When B is lifted, there is the dime, back again! It may be removed, the coins shown, and pocketed. The slight trace of the soap will not be noticed.

17. The Hang Ping Chien Coin Trick

This is by far the greatest of all impromptu coin tricks. It is named after a celebrated Chinese magician, who originated it. One skillful movement is required, but so subtle is the principle that success depends upon careful timing of motion rather than upon sleight of hand, and the trick is included in this chapter because it is within the range of the average person's ability.

The magician places three or four coins in each hand. All the coins should be small ones, and each hand should contain exactly the same number of coins—say a dime, two nickels and a penny in each hand. Then a larger coin—a quarter or a half-dollar, is added to the contents of the right hand.

The trick is performed while seated at a table. The right hand is placed beneath the table, and the left hand throws its contents upon the table. Then the magician remarks that he has the same number of coins in the right hand, plus a larger coin. The left hand picks up its coins, and the right hand comes out and throws its coins upon the table to verify the statement. The right hand picks up its coins and goes beneath the table again. Then the left fist is brought down towards the table, and is opened with a resounding smack. The coins are gone! Smilingly the magician brings out his right hand from under the table, and opens it. All of the coins are in the right hand. The coins from the left hand have apparently passed through the table!

During the course of the trick, the magician remarks that the large coin is included in the right hand as a magnet, and now he announces that it has drawn all the coins from the left hand. This is a tall

statement, but no one will be able to offer a better solution!

When the right hand goes beneath the table for the first time, it leaves all of its coins, with the exception of the large extra coin, upon the right knee. Then the left hand throws its coins upon the table, counts them, and gathers them up.

The right hand comes up, closed in a fist, as though it still held its quota of coins. The left elbow is resting on the table, the forearm extending towards the right at an angle of forty-five degrees. The right hand is swung up above the left, and is brought straight down towards the table. As it reaches the left hand, the right fist opens, and at the same instant, the left fingers (which are loosely holding the left hand coins), open very slightly, and the left hand coins drop out. The



How the right hand traps the small coins released by the left fingers.

open right hand, in its swift downward stroke, overtakes the falling coins, and traps them on the table. The left fist instantly tightens, and moves towards the left.

This movement is perfectly natural, and, timed properly, is undetectable. Every one supposes that the coins they see on the table are the coins originally in the right hand. So the right hand picks up all the coins, and goes beneath the table, where it gathers in the coins that are resting on the right knee. Then the left hand is slammed on the table, shown empty, and the right hand emerges with the complete supply of coins.

Care and precision are essential points in this trick. It should not be performed hastily. If no one is sitting on the right side of the performer, the transfer of the falling coins cannot be detected, even though the movement be executed clumsily. But when one has attained a degree of proficiency and has learned to time his work exactly, the keenest eye cannot catch the fall of the coins from the left hand, as they will be perfectly screened by the downward swing of the right.

CHAPTER IV

Sorcery with String

TRICKS WITH STRING ARE very mystifying.

The simplicity of the article used is very convincing; and as most string tricks depend upon knots or twisting motions, they are very deceiving and difficult to follow.

1. The String Through the Buttonhole

A loop of string is pushed through the buttonhole of the coat, and the ends are held in the hands. Suddenly the string comes right through the buttonhole.



Tie a piece of string in a loop. Push the loop through the buttonhole and insert a thumb in each end of the loop.

Swing the right hand over and hook the right little finger in one of the strings that run from the left thumb to the buttonhole. Then swing the left hand over and with the left little finger hook one of the strings that run from the right thumb to the buttonhole. The loop is now very tightly fixed to the hands.

How the string is threaded through the buttonhole.

Hands are ready to release.

Simply release the string with the little finger of one hand, and the thumb of the other hand. Draw the hands apart, and the string will come clear of the buttonhole.

2. The Knot on the String

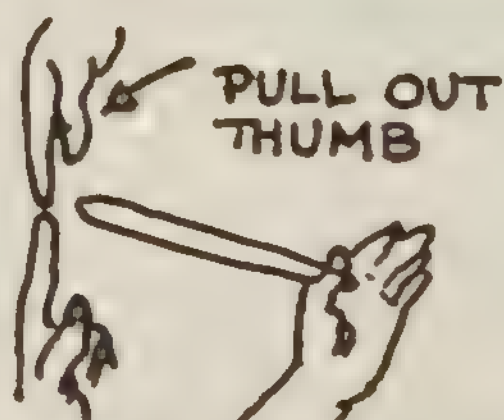
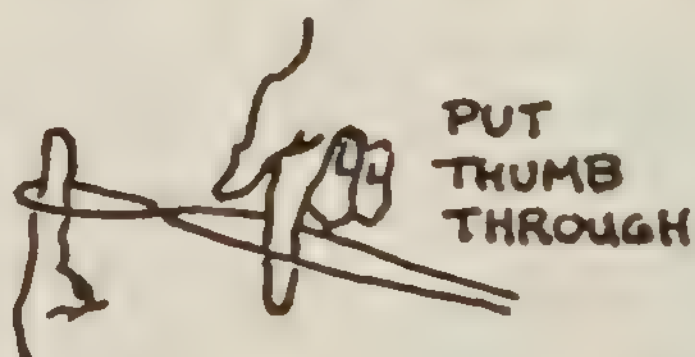
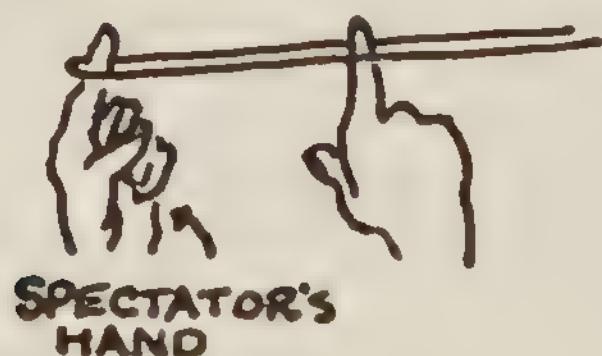
Allow your wrists to be tied, each in a loop with a length of string between. The knots may be sealed with wax.

You turn your back for a moment, and when you show the wrists again, there is a knot on the middle of the string!

The knot is genuine. It is made in this manner: Take the string between the wrists and make a loop. Push the loop up under the string that circles the left wrist. Then give the loop a twist, and pass the loop over the left hand. Push the loop under the string at the back of the wrist, pull the loop over the left fingers, and the knot will appear on the center of the string. With a little practice you can do this in three or four seconds. Have plenty of string between the wrists.

3. The Loop and the Finger

Have a spectator hold up his forefinger. Throw a loop of string over the person's finger, and hold the other end of the loop in your left hand.



The drawings illustrate the different positions assumed by the hands. The spectator's hand is at the extreme left and does not change position.

Now follow the diagrams with your right hand.

Lift up the left string of the big loop with your forefinger and carry

it over the right string. Twist your right hand so that you can insert the thumb in the little loop that now appears by the spectator's finger. Turn the right hand back up so that you can place the tip of your right forefinger up on the tip of the spectator's finger.

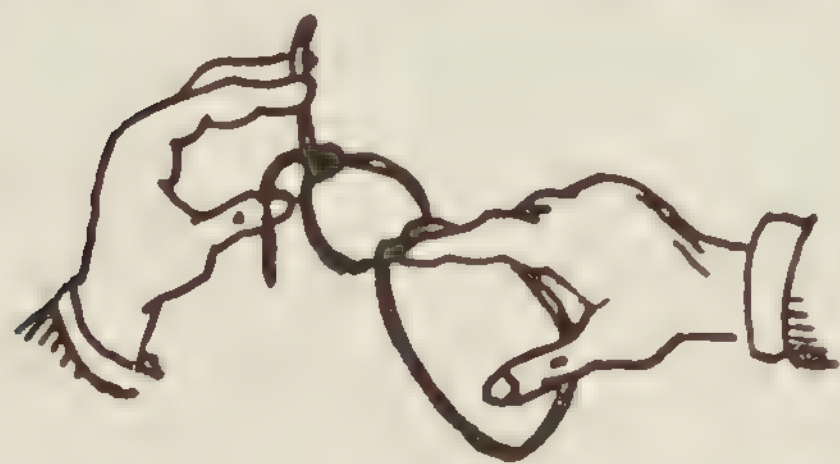
The string is apparently well fixed on your finger and the spectator's, but when you slip out your right thumb, the string will come free, although you *do not* remove your finger from the finger of the spectator!

4. The Disappearing Loop

The magician ties a piece of string in a single knot. Then he ties the ends in another knot, and places several knots upon it, so that the string is formed into two loops with a knot between them.

Every one will admit that the only way to get at the knot between the loops is to untie the big solid knot at the top.

The magician turns his back for a moment, and when he shows the string again, the loose knot has disappeared. Only one big loop remains. What has become of the second loop?



Pushing the center knot up to join the large knot at the top.

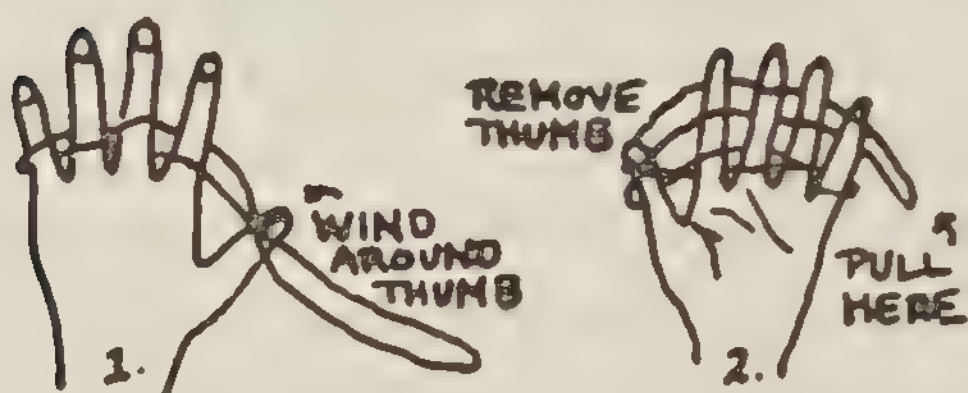
is left. The appearance of the top knot is unchanged.

This is a matter that perplexes every one. The secret is so simple that no one ever suspects it. When the magician turns his back, he simply slides up the loose knot so that it joins the big knot at the top. Only one loop

5. String on the Fingers

This is another string perplexity that is simple enough when you know it. A loop of string is apparently twisted very securely about the fingers; yet it comes free in an instant.

Take a loop of string. Hold one end between the right thumb and fingers. The back of the right hand is up.



Now slip the left little finger into the other end of the loop. The back of the left hand is up.

1. How the fingers are first threaded.

2. Final arrangement of the loop.

Now put the front string in back of the third finger, and the back string in front. Reverse the order for the second finger, and make the first finger the same as the third. This sounds complicated, but it is not. Look at the first illustration and you will see how easy it really is. Note, however, that the string which is in back of the little finger is always closest to the finger-tips.

Now turn the right hand over so that it is palm up, and swing both strings right around the left thumb. Turn the left hand palm up.

Loop the strings over the left fingers just as you did before; but do it from the first finger to the little finger. The uppermost string goes in back of the first finger.

The second illustration explains this very clearly.

Slip the left thumb free, and the string will apparently slide right through the left fingers, when you pull with the left hand. It will come entirely free of the left hand.

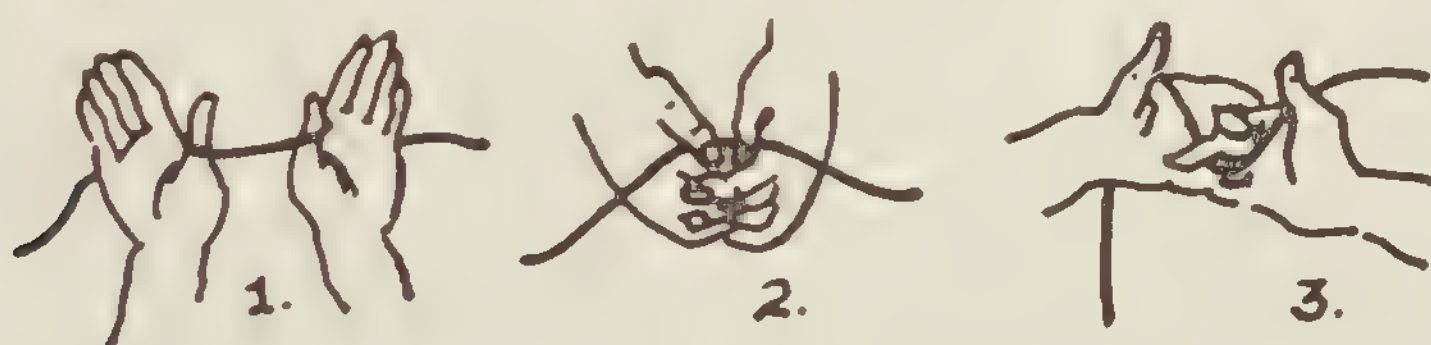
6. The Tied Thumbs

Take a stiff piece of string, and loop it over your thumbs, so that the ends of the string extend in back of your hands. Then fold your hands, and allow any one to tie your thumbs together as tightly as he wishes.

Now although your hands are apparently securely bound, you can do all manner of surprising things. You can put your hands through the arm of a chair. You can turn your back and remove your coat; but

after each action your thumbs will still be tightly bound together, and the string will have to be cut at the finish.

When you fold your hands, you must bring your right second finger inside the fold. Its absence will never be noticed, as no one will trouble to count the fingers that are in view.



1. How the hands are held with the string. 2. Front view of the closed fingers. 3. How the string is slackened.

Insert the hidden finger in the loop of string. When the string is tightly tied, your finger will be in it, along with your thumbs.

When you wish to push your hands through a solid object, merely slide your finger out, and you can temporarily remove one thumb from the loop. As soon as you put your hands through the object, slip your thumbs together in the loop and pull it down with the hidden finger.

The string should be cut off at the finish of the trick.

CHAPTER V.

Easy Card Tricks

THERE ARE DOZENS OF TRICKS with cards, and some of the best of them do not depend upon skill or sleight of hand. The tricks in this chapter require nothing but sensible presentation. Most of them can be performed immediately after they have been learned, and they will prove of value to both the beginner and the more advanced student of magic.

1. Mystic Court Cards

This trick virtually works itself. Lay the kings, queens and jacks in three rows of four cards each. Pretend to place them in a haphazard manner, but be careful not to put any two cards of the same suit in the first row.

Start the second row with a card of the same suit as the last card of the first row. The second card of the second row must be of the same suit as the first card of the first row; the third of the second corresponds to the second of the first; the last card of the second corresponds to the third card of the first.

Begin the third row with a card of the same suit as the last card of the second. The second card of the third corresponds to the first card of the second, etc., the third row bearing the same relation to the second as the second to the first.

Pick up the cards in verticle rows, starting with the last card of the third row, placing it on the last card of the second, and placing both upon the last card of the first.

Cut the cards several times; deal them in four piles, and each pile will contain a separate suit.

2. Ten Pairs

This was formerly called the “Latin Card Trick” due to the employment of four Latin words, but in the more recent version, English words take their place.

Deal twenty cards in ten pairs, and let any number of people memorize any pair that they may choose.

Then gather up the cards, and deal them in four rows, apparently in a haphazard manner, but really in accordance with the four words Chaff, Sheer, Usual, Color, which you imagine to be written on the table thus:

C	H	A	F	F
S	H	E	E	R
U	S	U	A	L
C	O	L	O	R

Place the first card upon the C of CHAFF; the next card of the pair upon the C of COLOR. Then place each card of the next pair upon a letter H; each card of the next pair upon a letter A; two cards upon the F’s; two on the E’s, etc.

You will observe that there are ten pairs of letters in the four words, and that no two pairs are similarly located in the rows. Ask the first person what rows his two cards are in. If he says two and three, you know that the cards are upon the imaginary letters S. If he says both are in row four, they are both on letters O. Thus you can pick up any pair called for as soon as you are told the row or rows in which the cards appear.

3. Eight Triplets

This is a variation of the preceding trick, in which eight triplets are

used instead of ten pairs, that is, eight groups of three cards each.

Your formula in this case is:

C	A	N	A	D	A
D	E	E	P	E	N
E	P	O	D	I	C
P	O	C	O	N	O

It will be noticed that the word "Epodic" does not exactly conform. If there were such a word as "Picidi," it would be more suitable. But in actual practice the formula works perfectly, for this reason: There are three vowels and three consonants in every word, but *only the consonants form connecting links*.

Thus in laying the cards, the magician would put down the three letter C's, then he would lay down the next three cards on the vowel letters of CANADA.

Next three N's; then three D's, and then three cards on the vowel letters of DEEPEN. He would follow with three P's, and would then place three cards on the vowel letters of EPODIC.

The finish would then be three cards on the vowel letters of POCONO, on the only three spaces remaining.

The rule is, therefore: If a spectator says his cards are in different lines, look for the proper consonant. If he says that they are all in the same line, they will be on the vowels.

4. The Baffling Card

The effect of this trick is very surprising. A spectator selects a card *mentally*, and the card leaves the pack, to be found in the magician's pocket!

Method: Memorize the top seven cards of the pack. This may easily be done by setting them in a memorized order, as: deuce, six, ace, eight, king, jack, nine. The arrangement of suits need not be con-

sidered, as the numerical values are all different.

Hold up the pack with the face towards a spectator, and slowly spread the top seven cards, telling him to memorize one. As soon as he has chosen a card, turn your back, telling him to write down the name of the card on a slip of paper. While he is doing so, you calmly place the top seven cards in your pocket.

Then turn around and deliberately shuffle the pack. Hand it to another person, and tell him to open the folded slip. On it, he reads (for example), "Eight of spades." When he looks through the pack, at your request, he finds that the eight of spades is missing!

As you then know the chosen card, you have merely to reach into your pocket and draw out the fourth card from the top of the heap of seven (the eight spot being four down).

The misdirection in this trick is very artful, and no one ever suspects that you have removed *all* the cards from which the first spectator could have made a choice!

Later on, carelessly put the pack in your pocket, and in removing it, bring out the six cards previously left there.

5. A Card Mystery

Five or six cards are laid faces down on the table. The cards are pushed around separately, and the performer turns his back, telling a person to pick up one of the cards, look at it, and replace it face down on the table. All the cards may be pushed around.

The magician, when this has been done, hold his hand over the cards and picks up the chosen one.

Method: Have some tiny half-grains of rice in your hand, and as you carelessly arrange the cards on the table, drop a grain on each card. When the card is picked up by the spectator, the grain of rice drops off, and you can easily detect the chosen card. The grains are invisible unless you look closely for them. Do not lay the cards under a strong

light, however.

6. Stop at the Card

The magician takes a pack of cards and runs the cards from his left hand to his right. A spectator is invited to turn up the corner of one card and look at it.

The pack is squared up and is dealt into four heaps, which are gathered up by a spectator. Then the person holding the cards deals them slowly, one at a time. Suddenly the magician says "Stop." The next card is turned up and proves to be the chosen card.

In running the cards from left to right, you must count them, so you know, when a card is looked at, what number it is from the top of the pack. You can count the cards very easily and naturally, without even looking at them.

As you deal the cards, one by one, in four heaps, count until you see the chosen card fall. Then count the number of cards that you deal upon it, so you will know in which heap, and how far down, the chosen card lies.

When the heaps are gathered up, note how many heaps go on the heap containing the chosen card. There are thirteen cards in each heap so it is easy to calculate where the chosen card lies. For example, if the chosen card is the ninth of its heap, and two heaps are placed upon that heap, the chosen card will be 9 plus 13 plus 13 or thirty-five cards from the top.

As the spectator deals the cards one by one, count them and tell him to stop when he reaches the chosen card.

7. Counting the Same Number

Let a person lift off some cards from the pack, and count them. He replaces the cards on the pack, which is squared up. Then you lift off some cards and count them—and you have exactly the same number as

the spectator!

While the spectator is counting his cards, early in the trick, the remainder is counting his cards, early in the trick, the remainder of the pack is lying in your left hand. Lay your left thumb across the center of the pack, and gripping the ends of the pack between your right thumb and fingers, bend up the ends. When the spectator replaces his cards, square up the pack, and press it very firmly, so the "break" between the two sections will not be visible. As between the two sections will not be visible. As soon as you release pressure, the cards returned by the spectator will lift slightly, and you can easily pick them off by taking the pack at the sides. Thus you cut the same number as the spectator.

8. Pocket to Pocket

The performer asks some one to cut a pack of cards, and place either half in his trousers pocket. He counts the remaining cards, say thirty, which leaves twenty-two in the assistant's pocket. The performer places the thirty cards in his own pocket.

Waving his hand he commands six cards to leave the assistant's pocket, and come into his own. He takes out his heap and counts his, there are only sixteen!

The method: Before working the trick, the magician secretly places six cards in his pocket. Thus the assistant—who puts his heap in his pocket without counting it—has six less cards than he supposes, when the performer counts the remaining cards and deducts from fifty-two to see how many cards the assistant has. When the performer pockets his own heap, which has been counted, it goes in with the six cards already in the pocket, and the trick is ready for the finish.

This experiment may be worked effectively shortly after the "Baffling Card" (trick number 4), for the six cards will already be in the magician's pocket.

9. Naming a Chosen Card

This is a very subtle card trick.

A pack is shuffled and is laid on the magician's hand. He immediately puts his hand behind his back, and turning around, invites a spectator to look at the top card of the pack, replace it, and shuffle the cards.

Then the magician, holding the pack to his forehead, names the chosen card.

Before beginning the trick, the magician removes a card from the pack and tucks it under his belt, on the left side, in back, with the back of the card against his body. Of course he has noted the name of the card.

When the shuffled pack is laid back up on the magician's left hand, he puts his hand behind his back, and immediately draws out the card that is beneath his belt, so that it becomes the top card of the pack. Thus the known card becomes the top card of the pack, and it is the card that the chooser looks at.

10. The Self-Reversing Pack

A pack of cards is fanned, showing the faces. The pack is squared and snapped, and when the cards are dealt, every odd card is face down, and every even card is face up!

This must be performed with a pack that has white margins. It will not work with every pack, but some cards are just right for it. Good packs can be discovered only by experiment.

The cards are alternately reversed at the outset. But the top and bottom cards are faces down. The pack is turned face up, and in fanning it very carefully, it will be seen that only the face up cards appear, thanks to the white margins of the backs. Among the visible index corners will be the white margins of the backs, but they will not be noticeable, and every one will think that all the cards are faces up.

The pack is squared up, turned face down, and when the cards are dealt they will be alternately faces and backs!

11. The Self-Dividing Pack

A rubber band is put around a pack of cards. Attention is called to the face card, say the three of clubs. The pack is tossed in the air; when in midair, it shifts itself, and when it is caught, another card, say the jack of spades, is on the face. But the rubber band still encircles the pack.

How to do it: Immediately after putting the rubber band around the pack, divide the pack and twist upper half around, one complete turn. Then open the pack like a book, revolving the upper half completely, so that it comes under the lower half—both halves being face down. Line up the rubber band, press the pack firmly, and it will appear to be normally encircled by the elastic. Toss the pack in the air, and it will shift itself in mid-air, bringing the original lower half back to the bottom.

12. Sympathetic Attraction

Divide the pack into two equal heaps. Tell a person to count down to any number of one heap and to note the card there. (For example: he counts down seven, and sees the ace of hearts.)

Then tell him to do the same with the other heap, counting down to the same number (suppose he finds the ace of diamonds seven down).

This is done while the magician's back is turned. The magician gathers up the two heaps, and deals them into two new heaps. He gathers up the two heaps into one, and, dealing the cards one at a time, faces up, tells the chooser to point out the first of the two cards when it appears. The ace of hearts (we suppose) appears first.

The magician immediately picks up all the cards that have been dealt, the ace of hearts being on the bottom, and places them beneath

the pack.

Then the magician deals off thirteen cards, one at a time. He repeats this operation three times, making four equal heaps. He arranges the heaps in a square. He turns up the top card of the last heap, and shows that it is the ace of hearts, which is natural, since the ace of hearts was the bottom card of the pack. He asks the spectator to choose one of the other heaps. When this is done, he turns up the top card of that heap, and it is the ace of diamonds—the other chosen card!

The secret is very simple; but the dealing of the cards makes it appear complicated. The first dealing will bring the chosen cards thirteen apart: that is, the thirteenth card below the ace of hearts will be the ace of diamonds, or vice versa. In this case we assume the lower card to be the ace of diamonds.

As soon as the ace of hearts is pointed out when the cards are dealt faces up, and the ace of hearts and the cards above it are placed beneath the pack, the ace of diamonds will be the thirteenth card from the top. Thus when thirteen cards are dealt one by one, the ace of diamonds will be the top card of the first of four heaps. The ace of hearts, as previously mentioned, will be the top card of the last heap dealt.

The magician must now make the spectator choose the heap that has the ace of diamonds on top. So when he arranges the heaps in a square, he puts the first heap nearest to the spectator, who will almost invariably choose that heap.

If he takes one of the side heaps, the magician calmly removes the heap to which the spectator points. Then he waves his hand at the two remaining heaps, and says:

“I will remove another heap, to leave one. Which shall I take away: the heap on the right, or the heap on the left?”

Whatever the spectator replies, the magician takes away the heap which does *not* have the ace of diamonds on top. It will be seen that if the spectator says “left,” the magician can infer it to mean the heap on

his own left, or the heap on the spectator's left. The same rule applies if the spectator says "right." There is really no choice in the matter whatever.

Thus the heap containing the ace of diamonds is the one finally "chosen," and the trick is concluded.

13. The Lucky Joker

Allow a pack of cards to be shuffled. Then run through the pack to remove the joker. Cut the pack into three heaps, placing the top heap between the other two, and let a person remove the top card of the center heap and put it in his pocket. By touching the outside of his pocket with the joker you can instantly name the card that is in the pocket.

The trick is done when you look through the pack to remove the joker. In spreading the cards, note and memorize the top card. Placing the top heap in the center is a subtle bit of misdirection, for the person who takes the card never realizes that he has the top card of the pack.

The removal of the joker—the touching of the pocket, etc., are all bits of misdirection that make this simple trick mysterious.

14. Finding a Chosen Card

This is a simple method of discovering a chosen card. Separate the odd cards (ace, 3, 5, 7, 9, jack and king) from the evens. Place the odd portion of the pack upon the even portion. Allow a card to be taken from the upper portion of the pack and returned to the lower. By running through the pack you can immediately discover the chosen card.

This is superior to an older version of the trick, in which the black and red cards were separated.

15. Two Together

The magician asks a spectator to name two cards of different numerical value, as eight and three; king and jack; or some such combination. Suppose king and jack are chosen.

Turning the pack (which has been shuffled) face up, the magician runs through the cards and shows that a king and a jack have come together, being side by side.

This is merely a chance taken by the performer. The odds appear to be hopelessly against him, but in reality they are in his favor. If the kings are spread through the pack, there will be eight cards adjacent to the kings. As the magician comes to each one of those cards, there is one chance in twelve that it will be a jack. As he has eight opportunities, the odds are, roughly estimated, two to one in favor of the magician. It is always quite a surprise to the spectator to see a king and a jack come together after he has called for them; and if there are two such pairs, or a king between two jacks, the trick will be doubly effective.

If a king and a jack do not come together, the magician resorts to a new form of an old trick. He finds the king of diamonds and the jack of hearts and slips them together in the center of the pack. Then he finds the king of hearts and the jack of diamonds and removes them.

He says: "Here is a king and a jack, as you requested."

Then he openly places them in the pack, some distance apart.

"Now," he continues, "I will snap the pack and try to make those two cards come together. Jack of hearts, and king of diamonds, come together!"

He spreads the pack and shows the jack of hearts and the king of diamonds together in the center. The similarity of the two pairs (jack of diamonds and king of hearts—jack of hearts and king of diamonds) invariably confuses the average person and makes him believe that only one pair of cards was used.

The same thing can be done with any pair: an ace and a five, queen and seven, etc., according to the spectator's choice. In fact, it is often good to work the second trick when the first has been successful.

16. The Clock Trick

Twelve cards are dealt off a shuffled pack, and are laid in a circle, faces down, taking the places of numbers on an imaginary clock dial. The magician states that he will leave the room, and during his absence some one may look at one of the cards and replace it in its proper position, noting its time on the dial.

When he leaves the room, the performer takes the pack with him, and counting off eleven cards, places them in his trousers pocket. He lays the balance of the pack on the table.

Then he picks up the circle of cards, beginning with one o'clock, and ending with twelve. He puts them in his pocket, keeping them separated from the eleven cards already there, and after a little thought brings out the eleven extra cards and throws them on the table.

"I have kept just one card in my pocket," says the performer, "and that is the card you looked at. At least I think it is. At what o'clock was the card?"

Suppose the answer is "Eight."

The magician tells the spectator to look through the eleven cards. He does so, and of course the chosen card is missing, for all twelve original cards are in the pocket. In the meantime, the magician, turning slightly aside, counts to the eighth card, and when the chooser is satisfied that his card is missing, the performer brings out the chosen card.

It is hardly necessary to remark that any card on the dial can be produced, provided that the magician artfully asks the number at which the card lay, as though the matter were of minor consequence.

CHAPTER VI

Handkerchief Mysteries

THERE ARE MANY GOOD TRICKS with handkerchiefs. Some are difficult, and others are easy. Those which make up this chapter have been carefully selected from a large list, and they represent clever and mystifying tricks that do not require any great skill. Too many handkerchief tricks are similar in appearance, and others become monotonous, so the reader should not be burdened with a superfluous number of such tricks.

1. Stretching a Handkerchief

This is a new and easy method of performing an older trick. The magician borrows a handkerchief and holds it in his left fist. As he pulls on the ends, he stretches the handkerchief to a great length.

This trick is partly an optical illusion. Few people realize how long a handkerchief is, when it is held by corners *diagonally opposite*.

Borrow a handkerchief, and crumple up the center into a tight ball. Grip the center firmly in the left fist, and let ends that are diagonally opposite protrude from the fist.

The handkerchief now appears to be about its normal length. With the right hand, pull one end of the handkerchief a bit; then pull the other end, turning the left hand back and forth with each pull. As the ends are drawn out, the handkerchief appears to stretch to about twice its normal size, and when you have pulled the ends as far as possible, seize one protruding corner in each hand, and stretch the handkerchief along your left arm, where its length will seem surprising. Roll up the

handkerchief and return to its owner.

2. The One Hand Knot

Tying a handkerchief with one hand is very easy, and quite surprising. Use a large handkerchief, preferably a silk one.

Twist the handkerchief by diagonal corners and lay it across the right palm, so that half of it hangs down in back of the right hand, over the wrist.

Bend the right hand forward, and seize the end that hangs in back with the right fingers, aided by the thumb. Pull the end up into the loop now encircling the right hand, and give the handkerchief a shake. The knot will be formed.

3. Hands Together

One hand holds each end of a handkerchief. The hands are brought together and instantly drawn apart. A knot is formed in that action.

Hold the left hand palm up and the right hand palm down. The left end of the handkerchief goes over the left forefinger, and under the other fingers. The right end of the handkerchief goes over the right thumb and forefinger and under the other fingers.

Simply bring the thumbs together. Then seize the left end of the handkerchief between the right thumb and forefinger. The left thumb and second finger grasp the right end of the handkerchief. Pull the hands apart and the knot will be tied.

4. The Pencil in the Handkerchief

A handkerchief is laid on the table, and a pencil is laid diagonally across it. The handkerchief is folded diagonally so that it covers the pencil, which is then rolled up in the cloth.

The pencil seems to be safely in the center of the handkerchief, but when the handkerchief is unrolled, out falls the pencil!

The secret lies in the unrolling of the handkerchief. Instead of unrolling both ends together, the outer corner is untwisted by itself for one turn; then both ends are unrolled together. This changes the position of the pencil, and puts it outside the fold of the handkerchief instead of inside.

5. Handkerchief Through the Wrist

When a handkerchief is twisted twice around a person's wrist, the ends are tied, and then the handkerchief is pulled right through the wrist, a real mystery has been accomplished!

This trick is, however, within the ability of any one who is willing to practice it.

The natural way to twist a handkerchief twice around the wrist is by running the ends under, changing hands, and continuing the winding. This is apparently what the magician does, but he really doesn't do it!

The center of the handkerchief is laid upon the assistant's wrist. Then the hands shape the cloth around the wrist. Underneath the wrist, the right thumb is pressed into the handkerchief, forming a projection in the cloth, and the left hand winds its portion of the handkerchief about the right thumb. Then the right hand is withdrawn, and the hands come on top of the wrists, bringing back the very ends with which they started!

The ends are tied in a knot, and when the magician yanks on the knot, the twist is broken beneath the wrist, and the handkerchief comes "through." The manipulation beneath the wrist must be reduced to a minimum, so that the spectators will believe the magician is simply changing ends.

CHAPTER VII

Dinner Table Tricks

MANY OF THE TRICKS explained in other chapters of this book may be performed at the dinner table. But certain tricks are especially suited to the dinner table because they involve articles that are usually seen there. It must be remembered that the dinner table performer does most of his tricks while seated. This gives him certain advantages that he would not otherwise enjoy, and many of the tricks herein described enable him to use his position to best advantage.

1. Magnetic Sugar

The dinner table magician who wants two lumps of sugar in his coffee should never pick up each lump separately. Instead, he should lay one lump upon the table, set the other upon it, and by lifting the top lump, *pick up the lower lump also*. This, he explains, is done by magnetism; and while the astonishment is great, he drops the lumps of sugar into his cup.

To perform this trick, put a little dab of butter on the bottom of the upper lump. No one will see the butter, and when the upper lump is set on the lower, the lumps will stick. By dropping the lumps in a cup of coffee, the magician can frustrate spectators who would be apt to inspect the lumps of sugar if they were left on the table. And, after all, a little butter doesn't injure the flavor of the coffee!

2. Magnetizing a Knife

There are two ways of performing this trick: an old, and a new. In

the old method, the magician grips his right wrist with his left hand, to "keep it from shaking," and then causes a knife to adhere to the palm of his right hand.

The spectators see only the back of the right hand. If they saw the palm, they would observe that one of the left fingers is extended, so as to press the knife against the right palm and hold it there. At the finish of the trick the magician lets the knife fall on the table, and calmly removes his left hand.

That is the old method: some one may know it, and some one may also notice that one of the left fingers is missing from the wrist. In the new method, when some one asks about the missing finger, the magician immediately shows it at his wrist, and moves all four of his left fingers. But the knife still sticks to his right hand.

In this case, a small knife, such as a butter knife, is the concealed assistant. It is held under the right wrist, by the left hand, and it extends into the right palm, where it supports the "magnetized" knife. The magician finally tilts his right hand so that the visible knife falls; then he drops his hands in his lap for an instant, and gets rid of the extra knife.

3. The Mystic Banana

The magician picks up a banana and offers it to three people. As they all refuse to take it, he asks them to examine it, and when they are satisfied that it is unprepared, he peels the banana, and it falls apart in three pieces!

The banana is prepared beforehand, but in a very artful manner. Take a needle and thread, and push it through the skin of the banana at the spot where you wish to make a division. Run the needle a short way under the skin, and then out. Draw the thread part way through, and carefully insert the needle in the very hold from which you removed it. Run it along a little further and out again. Continue thus

until the needle finally emerges from the hole which it originally made.

Pull both ends of the thread very carefully, and the thread will come out of the hole, cutting the banana crossways as it does so. The only marks that remain are tiny holes which cannot be seen, under an ordinary inspection.

Divide the banana at another spot, and you will have it in three sections. The trick will then work itself.

4. The Mystic Walnut

A person is asked to take a walnut. He is then told to examine it very carefully. When he opens the walnut, he finds a slip of paper bearing his name inside; or he may find the name of a chosen card, or the date of a coin.

If a card or a coin is used, it must be "forced" on the person by one of the methods described elsewhere in this book. The magician may borrow a coin and secretly exchange it for one of his own, which bears the date written on the slip of paper.

There are various methods of getting the slip of paper into the nut. One is to bore a hole in the walnut with a piece of wire. Then insert the rolled up paper, and plug the hole with wax.

Another way is to pry the walnut open slightly without breaking it, and to push in a folded slip of paper (which must be very small).

Still another method is to open a walnut which has a loose shell. Then insert the slip of paper underneath the kernel, well inside the walnut. Put a little glue on the edges of the walnut, and put it together again, closing it very tightly. It will stand the closest inspection.

How can you make the person take the right walnut? Easily enough. He does not know that you are going to perform a trick with it, so he will naturally take the one that is easiest to get. Lay some

walnuts in a dish with one invitingly near the edge; then proffer the dish so that the person will have to reach for one, and he will invariably get the one you desire.

If by any chance he should take the wrong one, have him take another, or slide the prepared walnut along with the first. Then tell him to break open the unprepared walnut. Call attention to its interior arrangement, and explain that it is impossible to break a walnut open without entirely mixing the kernel. (This, of course, is an exaggeration used for effect upon the spectators.) Then tell him to examine the second walnut and open it.

If you force a card or a coin, do so after the walnut has been taken, but before the walnut is opened.

5. An Orange and an Apple

Give a person an orange and an apple: one in each hand. Turn your back, and tell him to hold one fruit to his forehead, to concentrate. Then tell him to place his hands side by side on the table. When you turn around you look at the orange and the apple, and tell him which he held to his head!

The orange and the apple have nothing to do with the trick. They are simply used to divert attention from the real secret. You pretend to look at them: but you really look at the person's hands. The hand which was raised to the head will be lighter than the other, and the veins will be less prominent, as the blood has left that hand. This enables you to name either the orange or the apple as the chosen fruit.

6. Moving the Glasses

Set eight glasses in a row, the odd glasses containing water, the even ones empty, thus:

Full, Empty, F, E, F, E, F, E.

The object is to move two glasses side by side to another position. This movement may be repeated three times, with any pair of glasses: and at the finish the full glasses must be all together and so must the empty ones.

Here is the method:

Move the second and third from the left to the right end of the line, setting the glasses thus:

F * * E F E F E E F

Make your next move finish thus:

F F E E * * F E E F

Make the third move finish thus:

F F E E E E F * * F

Then move the two full glasses from the left into the vacancy, to finish the trick thus:

* * E E E E F F F F

The different moves should be made rapidly and it will be nearly impossible for any one to duplicate them.

CHAPTER VIII

Tricks with Various Objects

1. The Color Changing Balloon

A blue rubber balloon is held in the right hand. A pin is pushed into the end of the balloon, and it suddenly changes to a red balloon, in full view.

Two balloons are required: a red and a blue. The red is pushed inside the blue, and the red is then inflated, the neck being closed with a rubber band.

A little air is blown in *between* the two balloons, forming a small air-pocket between the blue and the inner red. It is not necessary to put a band around the neck of the blue balloon, as the pressure of the inflated red balloon keeps air from escaping.

The necks of the balloons are held out of sight of the spectators. When the blue balloon is punctured, it instantly explodes, and the blue rubber flies out of sight in back of the red balloon. The change of color is instantaneous, and is very surprising, as no trace of the blue remains.

2. The Number on the Bill

Let a person cover the serial number of a dollar bill with his fingers. You immediately tell whether the number is odd or even.

This is accomplished by looking at another part of the bill, where you will see a letter. If the letter is A, C, E, or G, the number on the bill will be *odd*. If the letter is B, D, F, or H, the number is even.

You can carry this still further. If the letter is A or E, the serial

number will be devisible by four with one over. B or F indicates that it is divisible by four with two over; C or G indicates a remainder of three; while D or H means that the division will be exact.

3. The Coin and the Glass Illusion

This is an interesting optical illusion.

Drop a dime in a glass of water. Set a plate on top of the glass and turn both over. (The glass should be about half full.)

When you look through the side of the glass, you will see *two* coins—a dime and a half-dollar, one resting on the plate and the other apparently floating in the water.

4. The Glass and the Cane

This diversion starts out as a trick, but ends in a joke. It is very amusing, and is good to work on a “wise” spectator who thinks that he knows every trick.

Take a glass of water, and a cane, or an umbrella. Stand on a chair, and press the glass against the ceiling. Then put the end of the cane against the bottom of the glass.

State that you will stand on the floor, holding the cane, and that when you pull away the cane, you will catch the glass of water as it falls, without spilling a drop.

Then ask the person who thinks that it is easy, to hold the end of the cane while you get down from the chair. He complies with the request, and you calmly step down and walk away with the chair, leaving him with the cane. He is then in a helpless position. If he attempts the trick he will surely meet with failure, and his only resource is to admit that the joke is on him and ask you to come back with the chair and relieve him.

5. The Walking Hairpin

A ruler and a hairpin are required in this trick.

Hold the ruler in your hand, which is just over the edge of the table. Set the hairpin astride the ruler, so that the points of the hairpin touch the table. To your surprise, the hairpin will walk along the table.

This is due to the unconscious muscular motion of your hand. People who think you are helping the hairpin walk can try it for themselves: the hairpin will always respond.

6. The Ball on the String

This is an even more surprising trick of muscular vibration. Obtain a small wooden ball, or a solid rubber ball, and fasten it, with a tack, to the end of a string. If you wish, you can use a heavy ring instead.

Wind the end of the string around your forefinger, and hold the ball above a man's hand. The ball will immediately commence to sway from left to right.

If you hold the ball above a woman's hand, the ball will sway backward and forward.

If you "will" the ball to stop, it will come to a standstill. When you hold the ball above a tumbler, it will start to swing in a circle, until it is whirling around the outside diameter of the glass.

This trick has been heralded as a wonderful talisman, and has been sold at all sorts of prices, under many high-sounding names. Its peculiar behavior is due entirely to unnoticeable muscular motion, and to suggestion. The ball will actually do what you want it to do, and skeptical persons can try it for themselves.

7. The Red Muslin Bands

The "Red Muslin Bands" is the modern development of a rather crude trick called the "Afghan Bands," which was performed with rings of paper. The new effect, which is a most clever mystery, was

developed by a Philadelphia attorney, James C. Wobensmith, who is an enthusiastic amateur conjurer.

The magician has a band of red muslin, four feet in length, and four inches in width. The ends have been pasted to form the band, and the band is cut at the center, with a lengthwise slit.

The band is torn down the center, and it naturally comes apart, in two separate bands. The method of tearing is illustrated in Fig. 1. The result is quite natural, and the magician takes one of the strips, and tears it in half, down the center.

Again two bands are formed; but, *mirabile dictu*, they are linked together! (See Fig. 2.) Every one is astonished at this strange result, so the magician decides to tear the other band in half. He does so, and the result is a more remarkable phenomenon—a single band, twice the length of the first band! (See Fig. 3.)

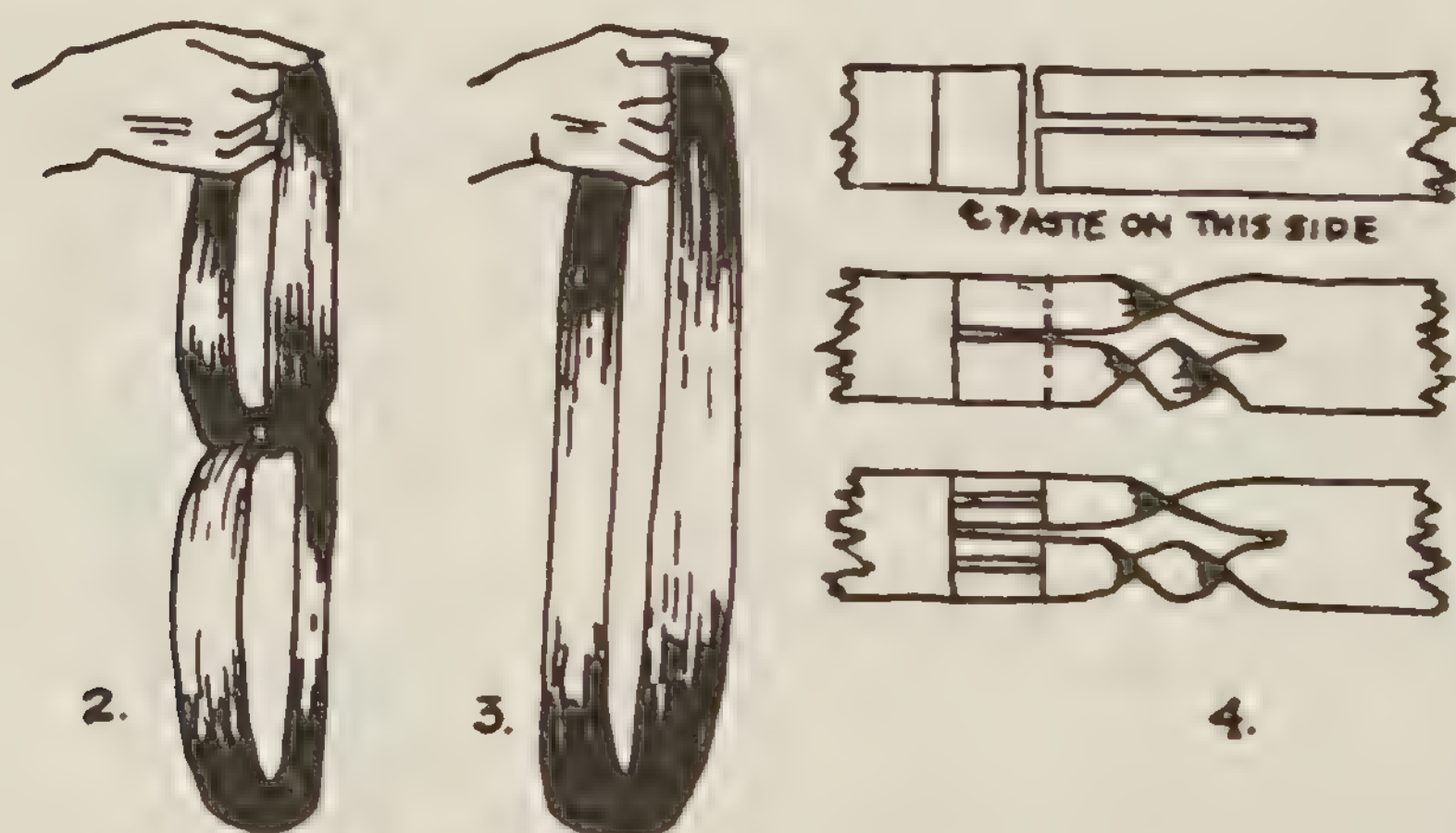
No skill is required. The trick works itself, but the band must be specially prepared. Take a strip of muslin, and make a four-inch lengthwise cut in the center of one end. Coat the uncut end with paste. Bring up the cut end to form the band, but before pasting, give a half turn to one portion of the slitted end, and a complete turn to the other portion of the slitted end. Then paste the slitted portions side by side to the uncut end. The exact procedure is illustrated in Fig. 4. Two slits are made in the center of each twisted section, dividing the band into four portions at the joint.

To perform: Tear the band at the center. Then take the portion which contains the complete twist, and tear it into two bands—which



will be joined. Take the other portion, and tear it to produce the double band.

The original band must not be passed for examination, but it may be freely shown before beginning the trick. Do not call it an "ordinary" band of muslin; to do so would excite suspicion. Simply remark: "I have here a band of red muslin, which I will tear in half to produce two narrower bands." The original band appears so simple in construction that it will excite no comment.



SECTION II

**The Principles and Application
of Sleight of Hand**

CHAPTER I

Sleight of Hand with Coins

SLEIGHT OF HAND WITH COINS is not difficult, to a certain degree. Coins readily adapt themselves to the hands, and the beginner will soon find that he can easily master a number of clever sleights and passes.

But the more highly developed art of coin manipulation is exceedingly difficult. There are no intermediate sleights with coins; they are all either rudimentary, or very complex of execution.

The study of sleight of hand with coins becomes, therefore, a comparatively simple matter. The preliminary movements may be readily understood, and the advanced sleights are not worth the time it takes to learn them—to any one other than a master coin manipulator. The last named class of sleights are, accordingly, eliminated from consideration.

The student of magic must learn to use his time to good advantage, and to resist the temptation to practice difficult sleights which can be appreciated only by other skillful manipulators.

Coin tricks are necessarily limited in scope. Coins are not large enough to be seen at a great distance; they are all similar in shape, and hence mysterious changes, ornamental sleights and the like are scarcely worth while. Straightforward productions and vanishes of coins are effective, however, and they form the chief subject of consideration.

The coin most commonly used by magicians is the half-dollar. It is well suited in size for all manipulations, but some magicians prefer the silver dollar. A coin midway between the two would probably be the best, but unfortunately, no such coin exists.

Dealers in magical apparatus have manufactured “palming coins”—stamped metal disks the size and color of a half-dollar. Such coins are often used in tricks that require a dozen or more coins. They are made in the dollar size, also. Coins of a dozen or more designs are in existence.

1. The French Drop and Improvements

The simplest sleight with coins is the French Drop. The same manipulation may also be used with other objects.

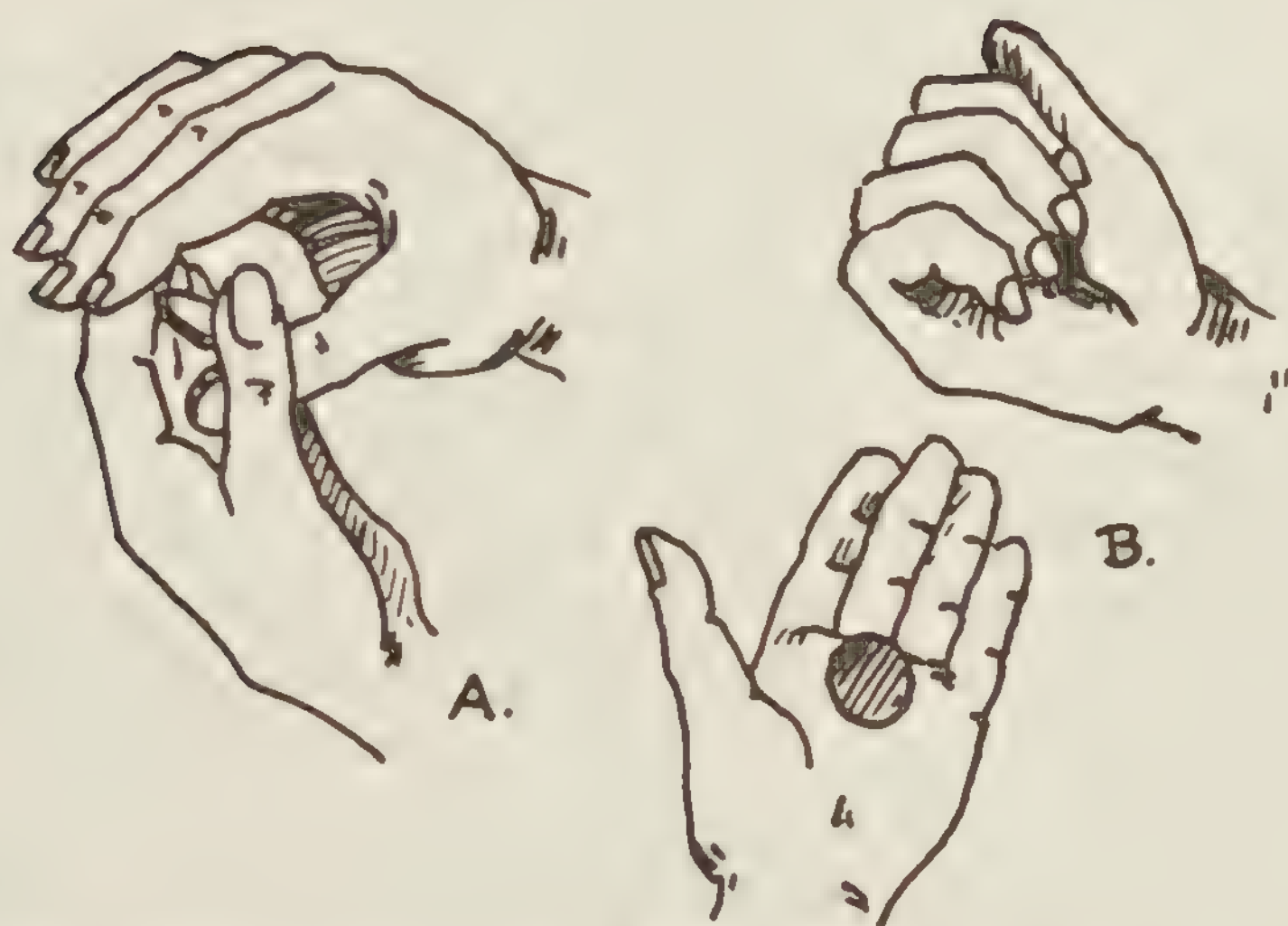
Hold the left hand palm up, with the thumb and fingers extending upwards. Grip a coin by the edges between the tips of the thumb and forefinger, the coin being in a horizontal position.

Now insert the right thumb under the coin and close the right fingers over it. This is a very natural manner in which to remove the coin in the right hand. But as the right hand starts to take the coin away, the left fingers are dropped slightly, and just as the right hand closes into a fist, the coin drops into the bend of the left fingers.

This movement should be practiced by actually taking the coin away with the right hand, and then executing the “French Drop.” The illusion is absolutely perfect, and is quickly learned.

The natural tendency in performing the “French Drop” is to turn the back of the hand towards the spectators, so as to hide the fall of the coin. This is not only unnecessary; it spoils the effectiveness of the illusion as well. The hand should be held with the sides of the left thumb and forefinger directly towards the onlookers. As the coin falls into the left hand, that hand should be dropped slightly so that its back turns towards the spectators, and the coin will be concealed in the bed of the left fingers.

There are certain “improvements,” or rather variations, of the “French Drop” that are worthy of consideration. While the sleight, performed with an object other than a coin, is rarely detected by the



A—How the coin is held for the “French Drop.” B—Coin, apparently removed in the right hand, falls into the left. This view is not seen by the spectators.

audience, so many persons have performed the “French Drop” crudely with coins that keen observers may suspect the coin to be in the left hand.

The following ruse invariably mystifies the keen spectator.

The right hand does not let the coin drop into the left, but actually takes it away. The right hand is extended and a spectator is told to hold out his hand to receive the coin. The fingers of the right hand are suddenly spread, but no coin drops from the hand (which is held back up). The reason is because the coin is “palmed” in the right hand, in a manner to be explained later.

Meanwhile the left hand behaves suspiciously, so that when the right is opened and no coin falls, the spectators take it for granted that the coin has disappeared from the right hand, and they are sure that the coin is in the left. Finally the magician opens the left hand and shows that the coin is not there.

A more elaborate variation is performed as follows.

The coin is held in the left hand in position for the "French Drop," but with the backs of the fingers directly towards the audience—the crudest position to be taken.

The right thumb goes under the coin, and the right palm is held towards the spectators. The coin is gripped in the fork of the right thumb so that it extends out in back of the right hand.

The right hand is closed, and is swung in towards the body and then to the right, care being taken not to expose the coin. The right hand may then be opened palm towards the audience, showing the right hand apparently empty.

Then the left hand is also shown empty.

To extricate the coin from its perilous position, the left hand approaches the right, and the left thumb is placed against the center of the right palm, the left fingers going in back of the right hand. The right hand, which has been held vertically, is dropped, palm up, to the horizontal; the coin is released and falls into the bend of the left fingers.

2. Palming a Coin

There are about a dozen ways of palming a coin, and some of them are obsolete. The reader will not be burdened with a description of inferior methods, but will be given those which are of real practical value, and which may be used to good purpose.

The act of palming a coin means simply that the coin is retained in one hand—in the palm—while the back of the hand is in view. The hand does not have to be held with the fingers wide apart, as though to prove that the hand is empty. Such a procedure would only excite suspicion. The object is to hold the coin in the hand and at the same time keep the hand in a natural position.

(1) The Finger Bend:

This method of palming is easy and simple. It has been explained under the "French Drop." The coin is merely retained in the bend of the fingers; by holding it between the middle fingers, and bending in the little finger also, the forefinger may be used as a pointer, to indicate the other hand, or to aid in misdirection.

(2) The Regulation Palm:

Balance the coin on the tips of the two middle fingers. Then carefully bend in the fingers, and press the coin directly into the center of the palm. By exerting pressure with the base of the thumb the coin may be retained in the palm.

This movement, simple though it may sound, requires practice. It must be done many times to perfect it.

The object is to hold a coin on the tips of the right fingers, and to apparently throw the coin into the left hand; but in reality the coin is



How the coin appears in the regulation palm.

palmed in the right. Thus quickness, precision, and ease of palming are essential. Any one can learn to palm a coin neatly, but most persons will have to practice the movement very diligently.

(3) The Edge Palm:

The coin is held between the tips of the forefinger, second, and third fingers, the second finger in front. The fingers are bent in just as in the "Regulation Palm," and the coin is gripped in the same manner, but by the edge.

It is harder to hold a coin the palm in this manner. At first the hand will be cramped. The advantage, however, is that the coin may be instantly reproduced at the finger-



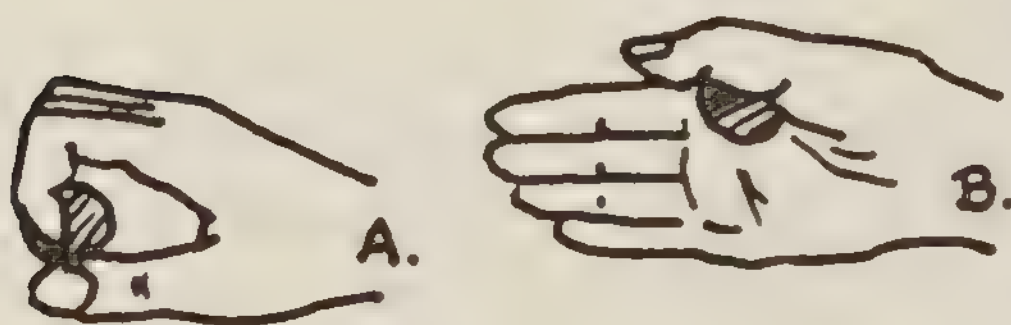
A—How the coin is held for the "Edge Palm."
B—The coin after being palmed.

tips by merely reversing the movement of the fingers.

(4) The Thumb Palm:

This is a comparatively modern method of coin palming, and it is probably the best.

Lay the coin on the tips of the first two fingers. Bend them straight



A—The beginning of the “Thumb Palm.”

B—The coin when “Thumb Palmed.”

in and the coin will come to the bottom of the thumb. Press the edge of the coin with the fork of the thumb and it will be held safely by its edge.

The thumb does not have to be bent inward, or held in an unnatural position.

The coin may also be started on its journey by first being held between the first two fingers, which hold opposite sides of the coin. The fingers bend in and slide the edge of the coin along the side of the thumb, right down to the fork. The thumb is extended, but as soon as the coin reaches the fork, the thumb is pressed firmly against the hand, the coin makes a semi-revolution, and is securely held.

To bring the coin back to the finger-tips from the “Thumb Palm,” bend in the second finger, lever up the coin, and slide it along the under side of the thumb, up to the tip; then the first finger may be bent in to press the upper side of the coin, which thus makes its reappearance at the finger-tips.

In the primitive form of the “Thumb Palm,” the coin was balanced on the tips of the first two fingers. Then the thumb advanced, and bent over the coin, gripping it between the bottom and the first joint.

This movement still has its uses, especially as the coin may be easily edged into the fork of the thumb—the position of the modern “Thumb Palm.”

3. Coin Changes

“Changing a Coin” is the act of substituting another coin for it, without the audience realizing that the change has taken place. The movement is of use when one wishes to obtain possession of a borrowed coin, leaving a duplicate in its place; or the change may be made as a trick in itself—the magical transformation of one coin for another.

The three best methods of changing a coin are:

(1) Simple Method:

The duplicate coin is in the left hand, which is held loosely closed. The right hand takes the coin, and swings to the left, palming the coin en route. The left hand makes a slight catching movement as though it were receiving the coin from the right hand. Thus the duplicate is in the left, and the original safely palmed in the right; but the spectators believe that the left hand holds the original coin.

(2) Expert Method:

The duplicate coin is in the right hand—palmed. The right hand takes the coin and pretends to throw it into the left, but really lets the duplicate coin fall, immediately palming the original coin.

This sleight, properly performed, is the acme of perfection. It must be practiced for a long time, however, in order to keep the coins from clinking as they pass one another. One coin is thrown out of the right hand almost at the same instant the other is taken in.

(3) New Method:

The duplicate coin is held in the bend of the right fingers. The original coin is balanced on the side of the right forefinger. The right thumb comes over and grips the original coin as described under the primitive “Thumb Palm.” Then the tip of the right thumb goes in and pushes up the duplicate coin so that it comes in view above the right forefinger. Just as that is accomplished the original coin automatically drops into the bend of the right fingers, into the position

previously occupied by the duplicate coin.

This change is very easily accomplished once it is properly understood. The left hand immediately takes the duplicate coin, which people believe to be the original.

4. Disappearing and Reappearing Coin

This is a very effective bit of sleight of hand, which depends upon the "Regulation Palm."

A coin is apparently placed in the left hand. The right hand rubs the left wrist. The left hand is opened, and is shown empty.

The right hand again rubs the left wrist and then rubs the back of the left hand. When the left hand is opened, the coin has returned.

Method: The right hand has the coin. In pretending to drop the coin in the left, which is palm up, the right hand palms the coin, the left hand immediately closes, then the right hand continues on to rub the left wrist.

When the left hand is opened, it is, of course, empty.

Without allowing time for people to try to guess where the coin is, the right hand is extended, and then brought over the left palm, dropping the coin into the left hand which instantly closes, and is turned back up. The right hand strokes the left wrist and the back of the left hand. Then the right hand moves away, and the left hand is opened to show the coin back again.

5. The Flying Coin

A coin is shown in the left hand. It is removed by the right which pretends to throw the coin at the left. When the left hand is opened, there is the coin. The trick is repeated a few times.

Two coins are used. One is palmed in the right hand, by any method described. The other coin is laid on the left palm. In picking the coin up from the left hand, the right hand secretly drops its palmed

coin. The left hand closes over the coin, and is turned back up—a natural procedure, because the right hand immediately lays the visible coin on the back of the left hand.

Then the right hand takes the visible coin, makes a throwing movement, in which the coin is palmed, and the left hand is opened to show the coin inside.

Then everything is set for a repetition; but the trick should not be done too often. In pocketing the visible coin, the duplicate may be dropped also.

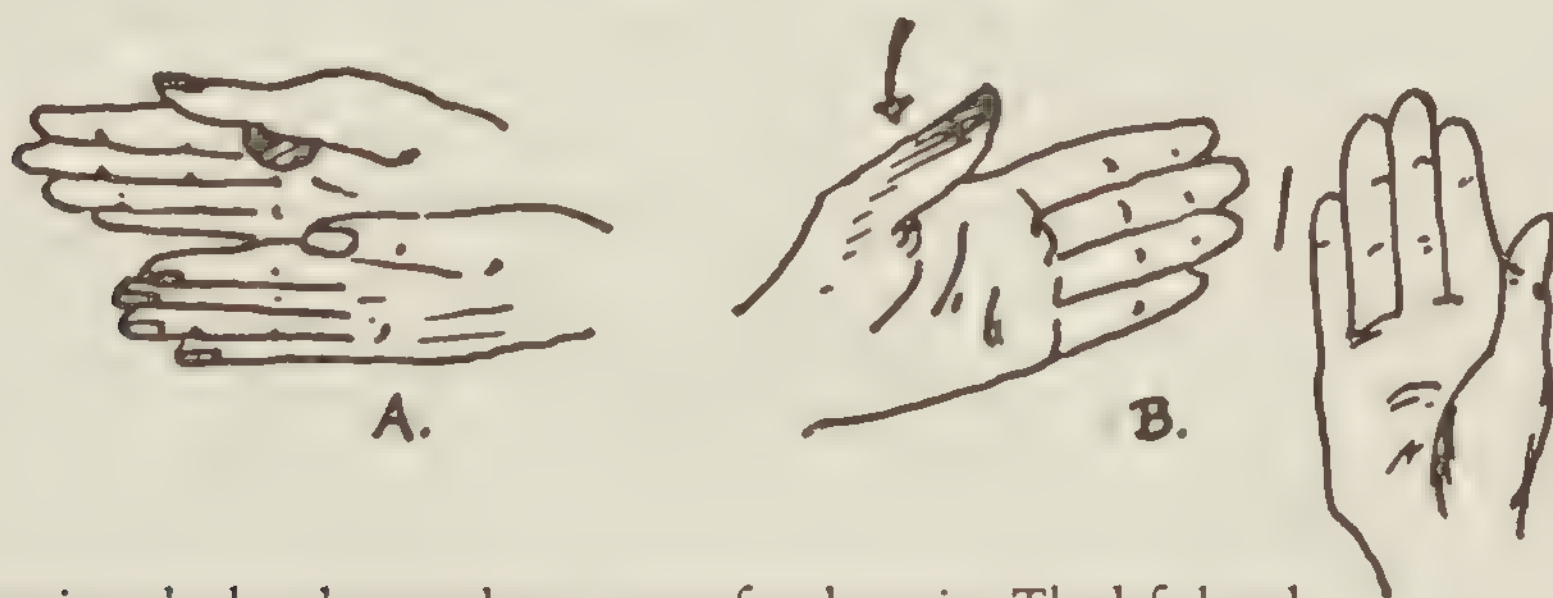
6. A Series of Coin Passes

This is a very effective combination of moves with coins. It should be remembered that mere knowledge of sleights and palming do not constitute a working ability in sleight of hand. It is through passes, changes, etc., that the primary sleights are put into practice.

Take a half-dollar in the right hand and apparently put it into the left, really palming it in the right, by the “Thumb Palm.”

Show the left palm empty, and stroke it with the right fingers. Turn the left hand over and show the back.

Stroke the left hand with the right fingers, starting at the back of the left wrist. Now as the right fingers come back again, towards the left wrist, the palmed coin comes directly against the fork of the left



A—Bringing the hands together to transfer the coin. The left hand must be turned thumb down. B—Showing the hands empty after the transfer.

thumb, which immediately grips the free edge of the coin. Under cover of the right hand, the left hand is turned palm towards audience, and the left palm thus appears to be empty after the right hand has passed over it.¹

Now the right hand is casually turned palm towards the audience and both hands appear empty.

The right hand is turned back towards audience, and it covers the left hand again, allowing the left hand to turn back to audience. This enables the right hand to palm the coin again, by means of the "Thumb Palm."

The right hand strokes both sides of the left and then produces the coin, at the finger-tips, from behind the left elbow.

If desired, the performer may use the following series of moves in conjunction with the preceding; these additional moves involve sleeve work, something unusual in magic, but the misdirection is good.

The right hand takes the coin, and appears to place it in the left hand, really "Thumb Palming" it. In making this movement, the fingers of the left hand should actually encircle the first two fingers of the right hand, which pretend to place the coin in the left.

The hands hold the position for a moment, and the right thumb releases the coin letting it fall down the left sleeve. This is an easy movement as the coin is directly above the sleeve.

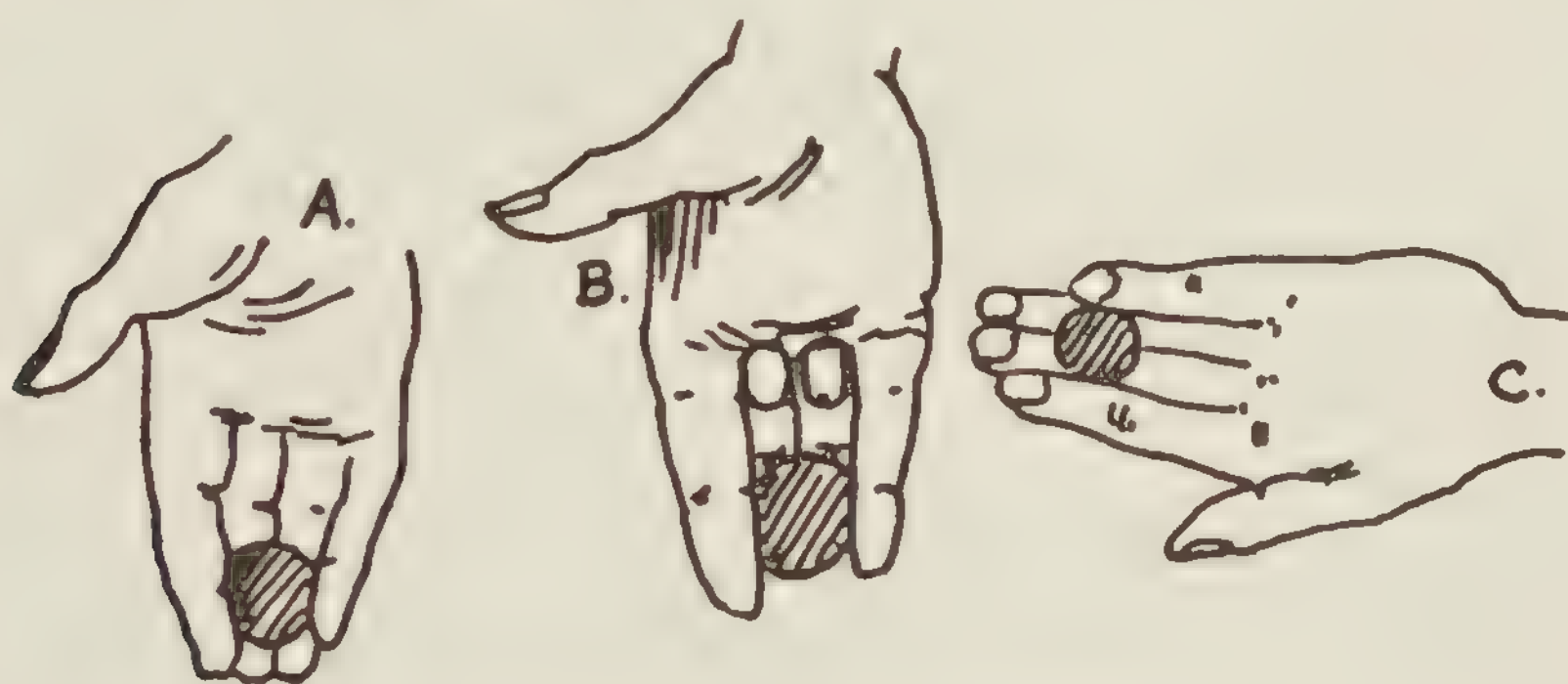
The right hand is removed and drops to the right side. The left hand is shown empty. Then attention is called to the right hand, which is shown empty in a clumsy manner as though it were endeavoring to hide a coin. The left hand drops to the left side, the coin falls out of the sleeve and into the bend of the left fingers. Then the right hand is shown absolutely empty, and the left hand produces the coin from behind the left knee.

¹Compare with the second improvement on the "French Drop."

7. The Back Palm

The "Back Palm" with coins is a difficult sleight, but it is worth mastering. We will consider it when shown with the right hand.

The coin is clipped between the tips of the first and fourth fingers. Then the middle fingers press the inner edge of the coin, and pivot it, so that the coin is hidden in back of the middle fingers. The front of the hand may then be shown.



A—The coin in position for the sleight. B—The reversal.

C—The coin behind the hand (away from view).

To show the back of the hand, the finger-tips are first pointed downward. Then they are bent into the right palm, the back of the hand being turned towards the audience at the same moment, so that the knuckles point to the right.

The middle fingers pivot the coin into its original position, and then press it firmly into the palm of the hand. The fingers may then be extended and the back of the hand shown.

To get the coin to the back of the hand, turn the finger-tips down and hold them loosely. Let the coin drop into the bend of the fingers. Turn the knuckles to the right, and pivot the coin to the back of the hand, at the same time turning the hand over so the thumb is up and the palm faces the audience.

In attempting this sleight, the beginner will probably think that he

can never learn it. But he should consider this fact. A person who has been writing with his right hand since he was six years old, can write without any effort. But let him try to write with his left hand. He will find it clumsy and awkward—just as hard as the “Back Palm” or other sleights. The fact that he has learned to write with his right hand shows that he can learn to perform sleights.

8. The Miser’s Dream

The “Miser’s Dream” is a trick that never grows old. It was performed by the original Herrmann, and elaborated by T. Nelson Downs, the “King of Coins.”

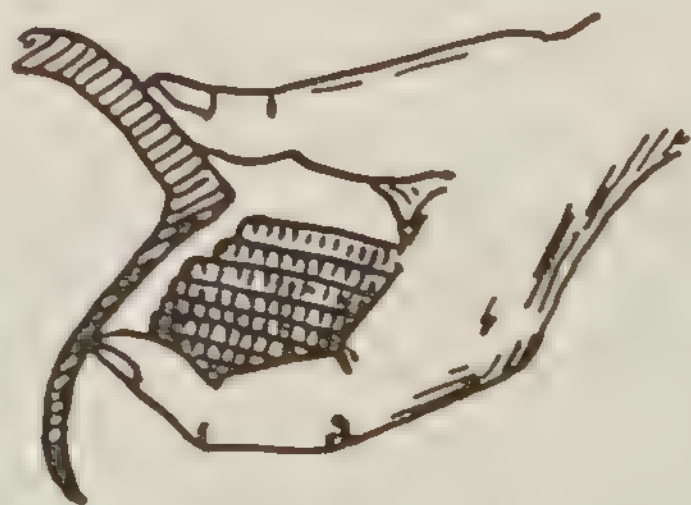
The following routine for the trick has been used successfully by the author. It is not difficult, and it is very effective, without any unnecessary moves.

The effect of the “Miser’s Dream” is quite simple. The magician catches dozens of coins from the air and drops them into a derby hat or a tin pan.

The right hand is the hand that seems to catch the coins. But it does not contain the coins. They are held in the left hand. Anywhere from a dozen to twenty-five coins may be used. These are in the magician’s left trouser pocket at the outset.

The magician asks for the loan of a derby hat; failing to obtain one, he takes a hat of his own and passes it out into the audience, or he may pass a tin pan around for inspection.

Turning his right side towards the audience, the left hand goes into the pocket and obtains the coins, holding them stacked in a pile in the closed hand. Then the left hand grips the coat lapel, in a natural position, and



How the coins are held within the rim of the derby hat. The fingers release them singly.

the magician walks down to get the hat.

He takes the hat in his right hand, and as he turns away from the audience (turning to the right), his left hand seizes the hat at the brim, the left fingers going inside and holding the coins pressed against the interior of the hat, the left thumb resting on the brim.

The right hand exhibits a coin, and apparently drops it in the hat. But in reality the right hand palms the coin, and the left fingers let one of the coins fall from the secret supply.

This is rather difficult to do at first, but the left fingers will soon learn to let the coins drop one by one. Some practice is required.

The right hand reaches in the air, and produces the coin at its finger-tips. This coin is also tossed into the hat—really being palmed while the left hand drops one in.

The magician continues thus, drawing coins from all manner of places, and apparently dropping them into the hat. He should stand with his right side towards the audience.

If he is skilled in the "Back Palm," the magician may occasionally turn his left side to the audience, and "back palm" the coin in his right hand, later catching it at his right finger-tips; whereupon he turns his right side to the audience and "drops" the coin in the hat as before.

When the supply of coins is exhausted, the magician dips his right hand into the hat and scoops up a number of coins, letting them stream back into the hat. He does this again, and retains half a dozen coins in the bend of his right fingers, from where he produces them one at a time, by sliding each coin upward with his right thumb.

The left hand then scoops up a handful of coins, and retains a group of them. It grips the hat as before, and the right hand takes out a coin, and pretends to drop it in the hat, but really palms it, and goes on producing the coin over and over again as previously described.

The magician walks in the audience and catches coins from people's

clothing. He may take a pair of gloves or sheets of paper, and hold them over the hat. When he shakes the gloves, he lets two or three coins drop from his left hand, and the noise makes it seem as though the coins had been shaken from the gloves.

A good finish to the effect is to give the hat to some one to hold. Then the magician places a number of coins in his left hand, and lets them slide, apparently, into his right, but in reality, the coins are captured in the bend of the left fingers. The "clink" makes it sound as though the coins were in the right hand, but the coins immediately disappear from there.

The left hand seizes the hat, and the right hand, making a grasp in the air, pretends to throw the missing coins into the hat, the left hand letting the coins fall at the same time.

There are numerous variations to the "Miser's Dream," but most of them present themselves during performance. The magician who learns to work the trick will always find endless bits of opportunity for effective by-play.

It is bad procedure, however, to pretend to throw a coin *through* the hat, letting it drop from the left hand. That is liable to destroy the illusion. The magician must do nothing that will make the audience believe that the coins are not being placed in the hat directly from the right hand.

The "Coin Vanish" just described in connection with the "Miser's Dream" is a good little trick in itself, as it can be performed in an impromptu manner with small coins. Either the right or left hand may be used in the planning.

9. Coin Catching Extraordinary

This is something new—and difficult.

The magician shows his right hand empty, and catches a coin from the air. He holds the coin between his left thumb and forefinger and

catches another coin. He repeats this procedure until he has drawn five or six coins from the atmosphere.

The coins are palmed in the left hand, with the exception of one, which is in the right. The right hand is shown empty by means of the "Front and Back Palm," the left side being towards the audience.

The right hand approaches the left, and one of the coins in the left hand is allowed to fall on the tips of the third and fourth fingers of the left hand. This move requires considerable practice; it may be facilitated by bending in the left third and fourth fingers, so that they push the coin slightly out of position.

The right hand places its coin between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, the back of which is towards the audience. Then the right hand, under cover of the left, "back palms" the coin that is lying on the tips of the left third and fourth fingers.

The right hand is shown back and front, and the coin is produced, and placed in the left hand, which releases another coin, to be "back palmed" by the right. Thus the coins are produced one at a time, until all are held in a fan between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand.

To vanish the coins, take one in the right hand, and "back palm" it. When the right hand comes forward to get another coin, the backs of the fingers drop the concealed coin upon the tips of the left third and fourth fingers, which palm the coin. The process is repeated with the remaining coins, but care must be taken to eliminate any clinking.

The most effective combination is to first vanish the coins, and then reproduce them with the right hand.

10. Three Coin Vanish

Three coins are laid on the table. The right hand places them one by one in the left hand, from which they disappear.

The coins are palmed in the right hand. The regulation palm is used. But the beauty of the sleight lies in an illusion of sound which is created.

The first coin is palmed in the right as the left hand closes. The second coin, held at the right finger-tips, is brought over the left hand, which opens as soon as the right hand comes in front of it. The coin is deliberately palmed in the right hand, on the second coin, and instead of trying to eliminate the clink, the magician makes the coins clink as loudly as possible. To the audience, it sounds as though the second coin has fallen upon the first in the left hand.

The movement is repeated with the third coin, and one or two more coins may be used if desired, but three is the most effective number. The clinking of the second and third coins is a perfect illusion, and when the left hand is opened, all eyes will be upon it. The keenest listener will not suspect that the clinks came from the right hand instead of the left.

The coins may be reproduced from the elbow, if desired.

CHAPTER II

Sleight of Hand with Thimbles

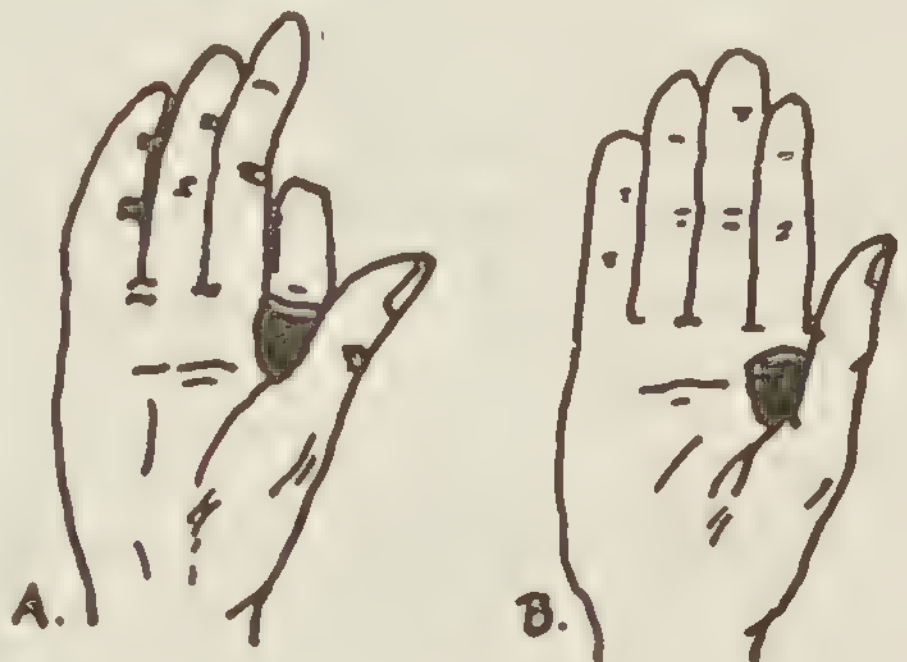
1. Palming a Thimble

There is one good way of palming a thimble. That is by means of the "Thumb Palm." All other methods are inferior, and need not be practiced, except as they may occur in special tricks.

The "thumb palm" with a thimble is similar to the same sleight with a coin. The thimble is placed on the tip of the forefinger or second finger. The finger is bent in to the base of the thumb, which grips the thimble and holds it there. Thus the back of the hand may be held up to view.

To bring the thimble back, bend in the finger, insert it in the thimble, and extend the finger. This movement can be performed so rapidly that the motion of the finger becomes almost imperceptible.

To vanish a thimble by means of the "thumb palm," merely place the outstretched forefinger in the open palm of the left hand. Close the left fingers over it, and stand with the right side of the body towards the audience.



A—Bending in the finger. B—How the thimble is held.

Arch the right wrist slightly, and snap the forefinger down out of the left hand, palming it as the right hand continues to drop. The

passage of the thimble will not be detectable.

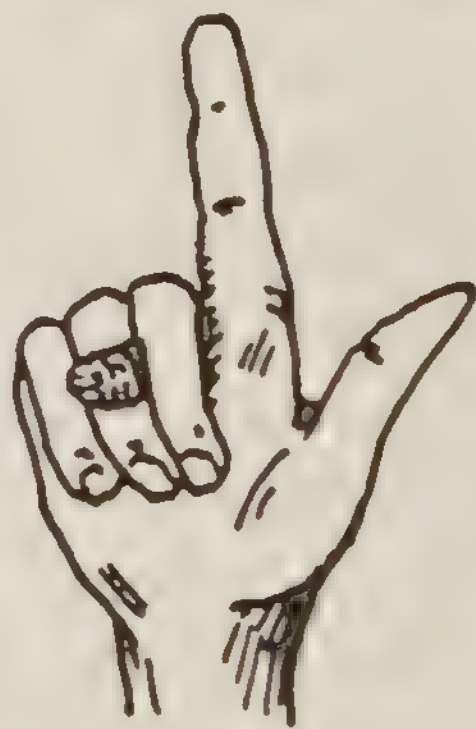
The thimble may also be palmed in the manner of a coin, *i.e.*, while the right hand is approaching the left, which seizes the right forefinger after the coin has been palmed.

2. The Open Hand Vanish

In this case, the palm of the hand is held towards the audience. The thimble is on the tip of the right forefinger, and as the right hand swings up so that the left can take the thimble, the forefinger bends in, and the thumb draws off the thimble, sliding it into the bend of the other three fingers.

The left hand seizes the right forefinger and pretends to remove the thimble. Then the left hand is shown empty. The position of the right hand, with the forefinger pointing, and the fingers bent in, is quite natural, and the palm of the hand being towards the audience seems to indicate that the thimble is not there.

To reproduce the thimble, turn the right hand back towards the audience. Roll the thimble forward with the right thumb and insert the forefinger.



How the hand is held in the "Open-hand Vanish." Note how the fingers hide the thimble.

3. Vesting a Thimble

This is one of the finest things in thimble manipulation.

The method will be explained, and the effect on the audience will then be obvious.

A thimble is inserted at the opening of the vest, between the second and third buttons from the bottom. The mouth of the thimble should be towards the right. Both hands are shown empty, and the left hand

is held in a loose fist, back up, directly in front of, and close to, the body. The right hand, with its forefinger and little finger extended, approaches the left. The forefinger of the right hand goes into the left fist, and the little finger into opening of the vest where it secures the thimble. The left wrist may press against the body so as to aid the right little finger in picking up the thimble.

The magician turns to the left; he quickly withdraws his right little finger, and bends it into the palm, with the thimble upon it. As the hands are extended, the left hand opens for an instant, and closes over all the fingers of the right hand, taking off the thimble. The right hand is removed, then the right forefinger is deliberately inserted into the left fist, and it emerges with the thimble on its tip.

The thimble may be vanished by an exact reversal of the process, the hands being drawn well away from the body before opening them and showing them empty.

More than one thimble may be used, by utilizing the other openings in the vest, and thus producing on two, three or four of the right finger-tips. Thimbles may be vanished in the same manner.

4. The Multiplying Thimble

This is the best of all thimble tricks. The magician catches eight thimbles from the air, one at a time, until all of his finger-tips are wearing thimbles. The following method is different from most, and is easy of execution.

Preparation:

Put one thimble in the right vest pocket, another in the right side of the shirt collar, a third in the left side.

Tuck four thimbles, mouths downward, under the belt, just to the left of the buckle, so that they will be hidden by the vest or the belt.

“Thumb Palm” a fourth thimble. Catch it from the air, vanish it, and make it reappear at the elbow. Vanish the thimble again (“thumb

palming it in the right hand'') and put the tip of the forefinger in the vest pocket. Bring out the thimble that is there. The audience will take it for the original thimble.

Put the visible thimble on the second finger of the right hand. Catch the palmed thimble on the forefinger. Vanish it, and produce a thimble from the collar.

Put the new thimble on the third finger and catch the palmed thimble on the forefinger. Vanish it, and produce it from the collar. Move the new thimble to the fourth finger.

Pretend to see a thimble near the floor; as you bend down and catch the palmed thimble there, put your left fingers under the vest and obtain the thimbles from the belt—one on each finger, but keep the fingers bent in.

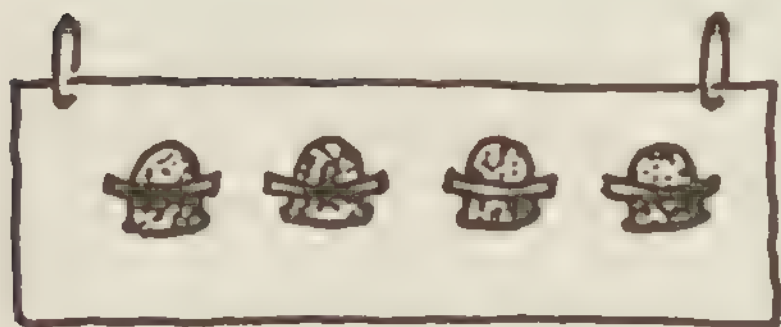
Turn to the right and hold up the right hand, with four thimbles. "Thumb Palm" the thimble that is on the forefinger of the left hand, so that the left forefinger can point to the thimbles on the right hand. The other three fingers of the left hand are kept bent in, and the back of the hand is towards the spectators.

Put the left hand in back of the right. Bend in the left forefinger, obtain the palmed thimble, and extend the left fingers. Draw them down below the right hand, and show that you have eight thimbles altogether.

There is another finish to this trick. Two holders, made of safety pins and paper clips are used. One is under each coat lapel, and each clip holds a large thimble, the mouths being downward.

The magician faces front and lays his fingers upon the coat lapels. The thumbs naturally go beneath the lapels, and each thumb obtains a thimble. When the hands are withdrawn, and the thumbs are extended, there are two more thimbles!

Some magicians use a special holder beneath the vest. A simple holder is made of tin, held to the trousers by safety pins. Holes are



Special holder made to keep thimbles in readiness under vest or coat.

punched in the holder, and cord-elastic is run through the holes, so that thimbles may be held there.

The belt, however, answers the purpose in most cases.

The holder may, if desired, be situated under the lower edge of the coat—on the left side.

CHAPTER III

Sleight of Hand with Cards

THE SUBJECT OF SLEIGHT OF HAND with playing cards is worthy of an entire volume in itself. No other branch of manipulative magic possesses such a wealth of available material. There are dozens of useful moves and passes, and nearly every recognized sleight may be performed in several ways.

So diversified is the art of card conjuring that progress is not difficult, but perfection is hard to attain. The generally accepted method of instruction in sleight of hand is to commence with the most difficult manipulations, and to explain a half-dozen different ways of performing each one. This is a great mistake, for the student, instead of concentrating upon one specific sleight, gives up in despair, after he has tried every variation without success.

The only sound course is to begin with the easier sleights, learn them, and then proceed to more difficult manipulations. Most books on card conjuring state that the "pass" is the backbone of all successful performances with cards; yet some of the greatest magicians who ever lived have never mastered that particular sleight! So it is little wonder that many beginners become discouraged before they have even started to practice with playing cards.

The reader should, therefore, commence by learning the preliminary, or easier sleights described in this chapter. Then he will be able to give a very creditable entertainment in pure sleight of hand; when he has attained a reasonable degree of success, he can take up the study of more difficult manipulations.

A great many card tricks start with the selection of a card by a member of the audience. The card is returned to the pack, after which the magician produces it in a mysterious manner. An analysis of this procedure shows that there are three steps to the trick, to wit:

(1) *The Location*, whereby the magician brings the chosen card to a desired position in the pack.

(2) *The Control*, whereby the magician keeps track of the card while the pack is being shuffled and cut.

(3) *The Discovery*, whereby the magician produces the card in an unexpected and surprising way.

Bearing these important points in mind, the reader is ready to study the various sleights, which should be practiced with the cards themselves.

A. PRELIMINARY SLEIGHTS

1. False Shuffles and Cuts

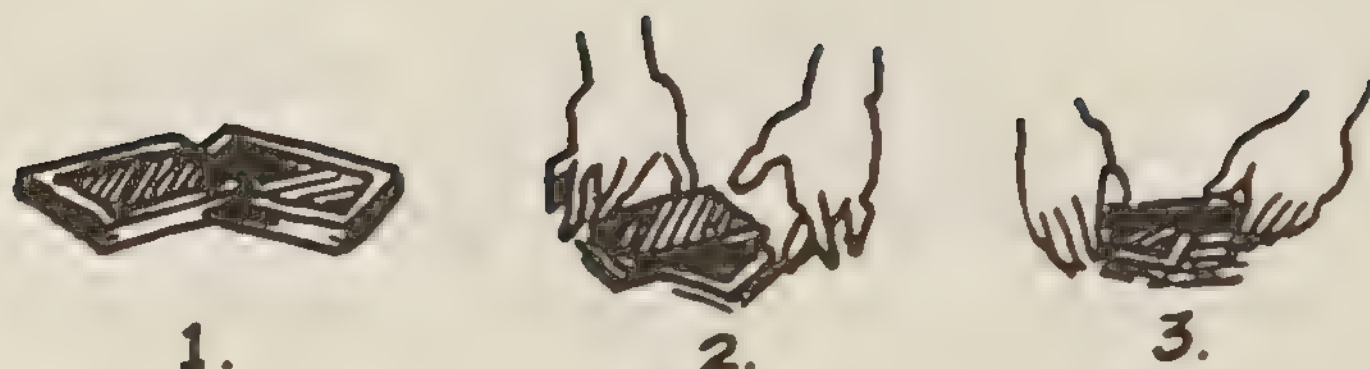
There are two ways of shuffling a pack of cards: the “dove-tail” or “riffle,” and the straight “overhand” shuffle.

When the magician has a card ready to control, it is usually on the top or the bottom of the pack. Thus when he uses the “riffle” shuffle, common sense will tell him that he can keep the card on the top or bottom by merely letting the card fall last or first when he “dove-tails” the two sections of the pack.

This is called a “false shuffle” because while it is apparently fair, it really keeps one or more cards just where the magician desires. Chosen cards may be kept on both the top and the bottom, simultaneously, if so desired.

There is another form of the “false riffle,” which does not disturb the order of any cards in the entire pack.

The pack is divided in half, and is genuinely riffled; but in pushing the two sections of the pack together, the magician does so at an angle,

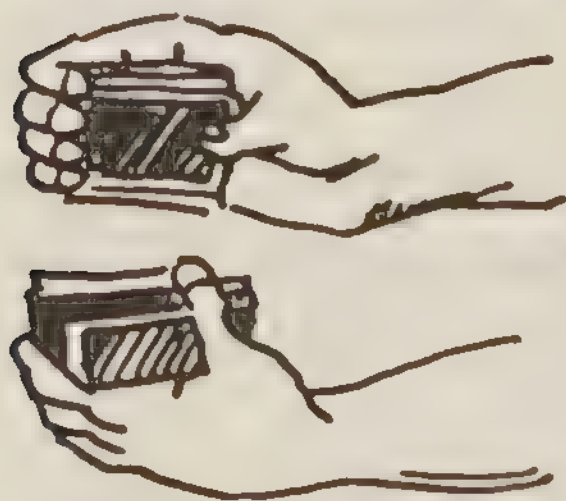


1. Starting the shuffle. 2. Pushing the sections together at an angle. 3. Drawing the sections apart.

so that one-half of the pack passes straight through the other half. When the pack is squared up, the ends will not be flush, but each half of the pack will be extending an inch or so on either end. The hands grip the protruding ends, and pull the two halves apart (apparently cutting the pack). Then the original upper half is placed on the lower half, and the pack is just where it started.

Coming to the "false shuffle" by the overhand method, we find that there are numerous plans of action, some devised to keep chosen cards on top; others to keep them on the bottom. We will, however, consider one method only, a method which serves every purpose, for it does not disturb the order of the cards whatsoever.

The pack is held lengthwise between the tips of the right fingers and the right thumb, with the faces of the cards towards the right palm.



Position of the hands in executing the regulation shuffle.

Now, if the magician were to genuinely shuffle the pack, he would proceed thus: the right hand, aided by the left thumb, drops a few cards upon the left fingers. Then the right hand drops a few more cards upon those cards, which are leaning against the left fingers. The cards in the left hand are tilted against the left thumb so that the right hand can drop a few cards *beneath* the

cards in the left. Then the left hand cards are tilted against the left

fingers, so that the right hand may drop a few more cards upon those in the left. The alternating process is repeated until no more cards remain in the right hand.

In executing the "false shuffle," the magician apparently does the same as in the ordinary overhand shuffle. But, in reality, he does not drop any cards from the right hand on top of the cards in the left. Instead, he merely *places* the right hand packet upon the left, and immediately withdraws it. He does, however, drop cards from the right hand packet *beneath* the cards in the left hand, so that the number of cards in the right hand diminishes continually.

This is executed fairly rapidly, and it forms a perfect optical illusion. The magician apparently shuffles the pack quite thoroughly, but in reality he does not disturb a single card!

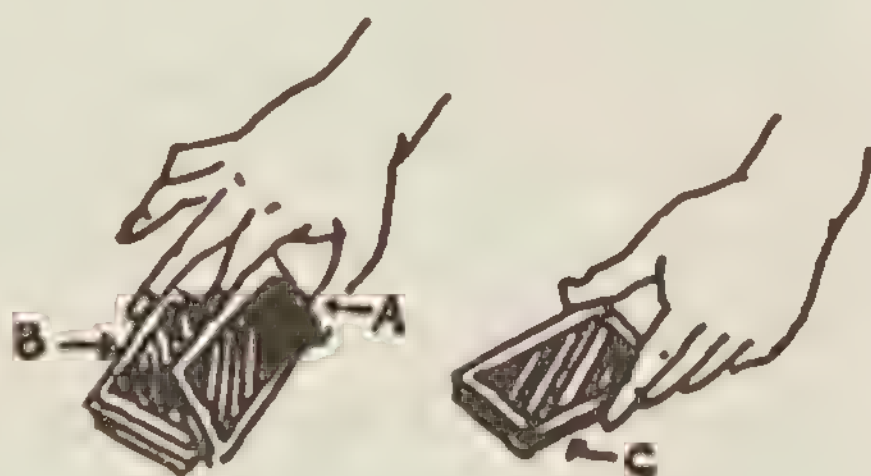
This is one of the easiest "false shuffles" in existence; it is the most perfect, the most illusive, and the most satisfactory. The person who learns it will not need to practice any other, for this shuffle serves virtually every purpose; and it is much better to concentrate upon learning to perform it easily and smoothly rather than trying to learn a half-dozen shuffles which are not one bit more effective.

The "False Cut" is best executed in the following manner. Lay the pack back up on the table, and pick it up with the left hand, thumb at one side, fingers at the other.

The right hand grips the sides of the packet near the right end, in the same manner as the left hand, and the right thumb and forefinger draw off a dozen or more cards from the *bottom* of the pack.

The right hand is lifted, and the tips of the right thumb and second

finger draw off a group of cards from the *top* of the pack, this group



A—Lower section. B—Top section.
C—Middle section. Drop the groups
in the order A, C, B.

coming *below* the little packet held between the right thumb and forefinger.

The uppermost packet in the right hand (*i. e.*, the cards held between the thumb and forefinger) is tossed face down on the table. The cards still in the left hand are dropped upon that packet, and the cards still in the right hand (between the thumb and second finger) are laid on top.

To all appearances the magician has given the cards a most complicated cut; actually he has not disturbed the order of the pack one bit.

“False cuts” and “false shuffles” are the methods by which chosen cards may be “controlled.”

The magician may use them as a makeshift forms of “card locations” by letting a person shuffle the pack and then glance at the top card or cards. Then the magician picks up the pack, and apparently shuffles and cuts it; but at the finish the card or cards will still be on top.

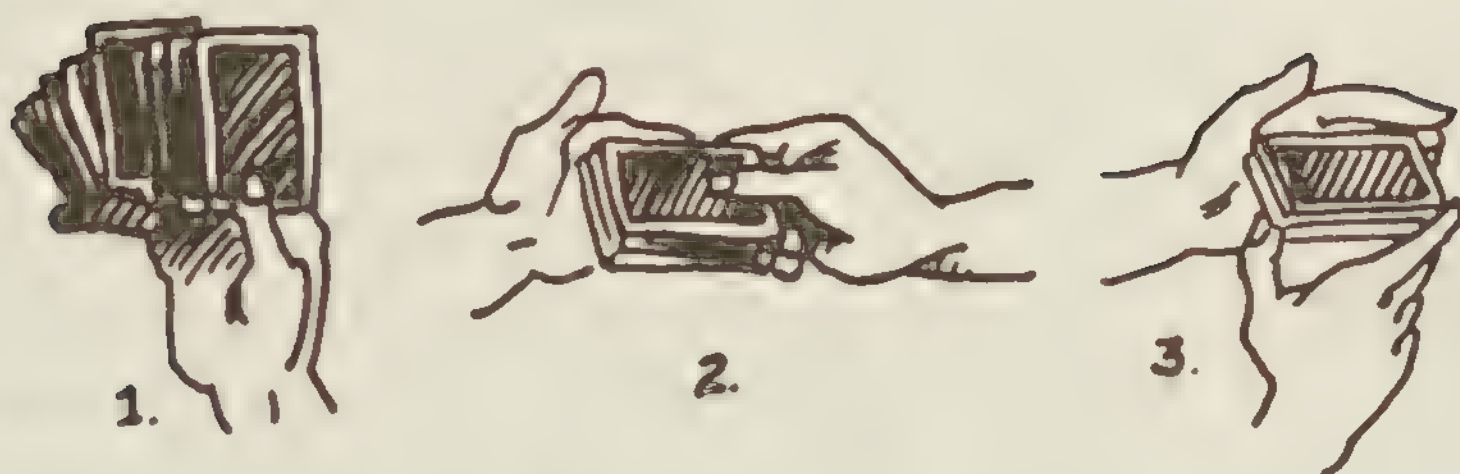
2. The Fan Pass

This is an original method whereby a chosen card may be easily brought to the top or bottom of the pack, after it has been placed in the center.

Spread the cards in a fan, and allow a card to be withdrawn. While the spectator is looking at the card, grip the inner end of the fan firmly in the right hand. When the chosen card is pushed back into the fan, it will not go all the way in, but will project slightly towards the spectator.

The right hand turns the spread end of the fan towards the body, and the left hand closes up the fan, and takes hold of the squared up pack. The pack will then be in the left hand, with the chosen card protruding inwards.

The right hand cuts the pack by lifting off the cards *above* the



1. Holding the pack fanned with the chosen card projecting. 2. Squaring up the pack. Note the extended card. 3. Cutting the pack to shuffle. Cut at the chosen card.

projecting card. Then the lower half of the pack is laid on top, and the chosen card is thus brought to the top of the pack.

If the chosen card is needed at the bottom, the right hand lifts up the projecting card and all above it, in cutting the pack.

In either event, the right thumb does the work, and after a little practice, this simple sleight becomes very easy to perform.

3. Palming Cards

In certain card mysteries, it is necessary for the magician to secretly remove one or more cards from the pack. This is accomplished by means of the "Palm."

Lay the pack in the left hand, with the side of the pack wedged in the fork of the thumb. The thumb lays across the center of the pack. The backs of the cards are up.

As the right hand approaches to take the pack, the left thumb pushes the top card on to the tips of the left fingers. The palm of the right hand is laid flat upon the back of the top card, while the third finger of the left hand presses the card firmly into the right hand. The fingers of the right hand are bent to retain the card, which is also bent slightly.

The back of the right hand is immediately turned towards the spectators, and the right hand takes the pack between the thumb and



Regulation Palm:
View from beneath.
Showing how the
card is pressed into
the right palm by
the left middle
finger.

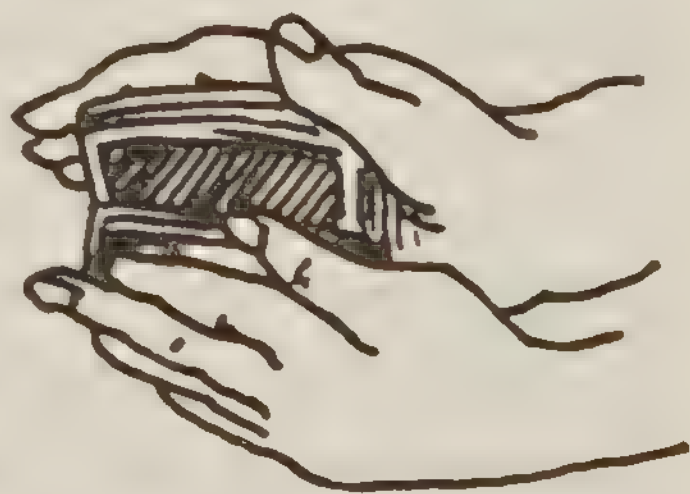
the side of the forefinger. This makes the position of the right hand appear normal.

The right hand may then transfer the pack to the left, or give it to a member of the audience, the right hand immediately dropping to the side, or being rested carelessly upon the left forearm.

In palming a specified number of cards, as three, four or five, the left hand should first count them by sliding them to the right side, one at a time, by means of the left thumb. The right hand, resting carelessly at the side of the pack, may assist in this operation. The right hand finally pushes the cards back on top of the pack, but the tip of the third finger of the left hand is inserted between the cards to be palmed and the remainder of the pack, so when the right hand approaches to palm the cards, the third finger of the left hand can quickly and neatly push them into the right palm.

In palming an indefinite number of cards, the left thumb lays alongside of the pack, and bends down on the cards, the left forefinger pressing upward, beneath the center of the pack. As soon as the right hand covers the pack, the left releases some of the cards, and, due to the pressure of the forefinger, they spring upward, and are seized in the right palm, which bends around them. This is called the "Spring Palm," and it may be executed very easily and rapidly.

Replacing palmed cards on the pack is sometimes necessary, and many magicians neglect this important, though comparatively simple action. One method is to drop the cards on the pack under pretence of squaring up the cards, and the right fingers immediately snapping or



riffling the end of the pack.

Another way is to pass the right hand carelessly over the pack, letting the cards fall upon it, and immediately extending the left hand, while the right hand pulls up the left sleeve.

4. Card Changes

(a) THE TOP CHANGE: This is the most perfect form of an old sleight called the "Top Change."

Lay the pack crosswise on the left hand. Turn the top card face up on the pack. The left thumb pushes the card an inch to the right, and the card is taken between the right thumb (below) and the forefinger (above). The right hand turns the card face down on the pack, and at the same instant the left thumb pushes the second card of the pack an inch to the right.

Now as the right hand lays the top card squarely on the pack, the second card is easily gripped between the first and second fingers of the right hand. The right hand moves away to the right, carrying the second card, while the left thumb presses upon the top card and retains it on the pack.

This sleight may be executed very deliberately, and it is practically undetectable.

(b) THE BOTTOM CHANGE: Suppose a card has been chosen and is on the top of the pack. The pack is held in the left hand (in the manner just described) while the right hand takes a card from the pack, and exhibits it, between the first and second fingers.

As the card is not the one chosen, the right hand turns it face down, and approaches the left hand, while the left thumb pushes the top card (the chosen card) an inch to the right.

The last three fingers of the left hand lower to receive the card from the right hand, and as the card is placed between them and the forefinger, the top card is naturally gripped between the right thumb

and forefinger.

Just as the magician starts this movement, he turns rapidly to the left, and makes the "change" with the hands in motion. The instant that the change is completed, the left hand is extended, while the right hand rubs the card it now holds upon the left sleeve. When the face of the card is shown, it is seen to be the chosen card!

This sleight of hand is quite as effective as the "Top Change," and while it requires careful timing, with no hesitation, it is not difficult.

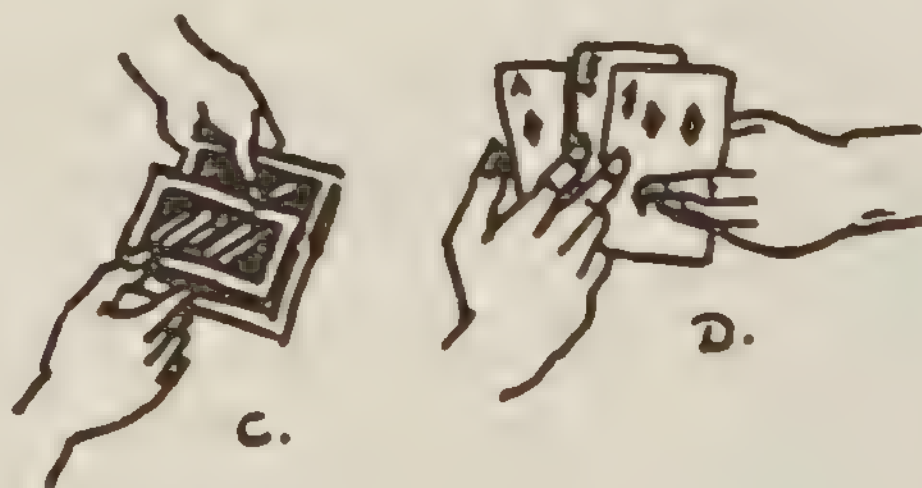
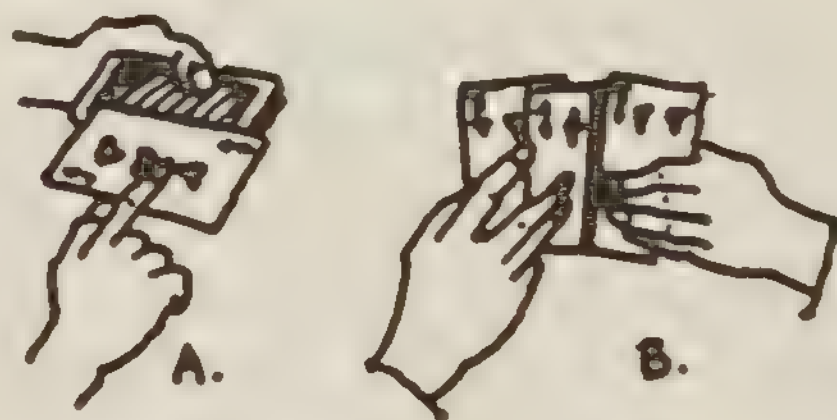
Both "Changes" should be frequently practiced.

5. The False Count

The purpose of this sleight is to make a group of cards seem to be of greater number than it really is. There are several elaborate methods of "False vounting," but, as is often the case, the simplest is the most natural, and, therefore, the most satisfactory.

Hold the packet of cards crosswise on the left palm. Draw away the top card with the right thumb and fingers, the thumb on top. The left hand assists by pushing the card slightly to the right.

The right hand lays its card back on the left packet and immediately draws away the second card along with the first, the magician saying "Two."



A—The beginning of the "Top Change."
 B—Changing the card (seen from below).
 C—Changing the card (seen from above).
 D—Position of the hands in completing the "Bottom Change" (view from below).

The third card is taken away in the same manner, the magician saying "Three." But the fourth time, the three cards alone are replaced and withdrawn. The hands move just as though an additional card were actually taken away and the magician says "Four."

The counting is repeated with the remaining cards. The magician can make a total of four cards appear to be five; he can count seven cards and make them seem to be ten by employing the false counting method three times.

6. The Force

"Forcing" is an art which can be acquired only by constant practice. Ease of movement, calmness and confidence are necessary to its accomplishment. By means of the "Force" the magician can cause a spectator to take whatever card the magician wishes, although the person will believe that he had a free choice.

The following method of "Forcing" was the special method used by Oscar M. Thomson, Past President of the Philadelphia Assembly Society of American Magicians, and it is one of the most effective versions in existence.

The pack is held in the left hand, crosswise, and the magician cuts the pack, glimpsing the bottom card as he does so.¹ We will suppose the card is the ace of spades. The magician lets the upper half of the pack (with the ace on the bottom) rest upon the tips of his left third and fourth fingers. There is a slight break between the two halves of the pack.

The left thumb begins to push the cards slowly to the right, the right hand receiving the cards, so that they are spread out between the hands. As the cards move along, the magician will discover that the third and fourth fingers of his left hand form a pivot upon which the upper half rests, and that by suddenly extending those pivot fingers, he

¹The magician who can perform the "Pass" fairly well will glimpse the bottom card and bring it to the center by the "Pass."

can immediately thrust the ace of spades forward.

As the spectator reaches out to take the cards, the magician runs them slowly or rapidly from left to right according to the amount of speed displayed by the spectator. The object is to time the motion of the cards so that the ace of spades will be reached at just the instant when the spectator is about to pick a card. As the ace of spades rests on the pivot fingers, the magician can tell, *without looking at the cards* just when his thumb reaches the ace of spades. As it does so, the fingers are extended, and the ace is very gently and naturally projected into the spectator's hands.

The left thumb keeps on spreading the cards of the lower half of the pack, as though the magician does not know that the spectator has already withdrawn a card.

If by any chance the spectator should pick the wrong card, the magician must proceed to force the ace of spades on another person, and later return to the first person and perform some minor trick with the card he selected.

7. The Side Steal

This is a comparatively new sleight—used as a “Card Location”—and it has never before been explained in print. A few magicians are now using it almost exclusively as a means of locating a chosen card.

The magician holds the pack in his left hand, with the thumb across the center of the pack. With his right forefinger he riffles the index corner of the pack and invites a spectator to insert a finger anywhere he wishes. This is done, and the person notes the card above his finger.

As soon as the spectator removes his finger, the magician presses the ball of his left forefinger against the right side of the pack, and lets the rest of the cards fall upon it. A bit of the flesh of the left forefinger will be pressed in, and will preserve a break at the desired spot.

The right corners of the pack, above the break, are gripped by the

tip of the right forefinger (at the outer corner) and the tip of the right thumb (at the inner corner). Thus the upper section of the pack (with the selected card on the bottom) is raised slightly. The tips of the left fingers are inserted in the break, and they push the chosen card to the right, little by little, until it comes directly beneath the right palm, when the left fingers press it firmly into the right palm. The right hand facilitates this by letting go of the corners of the pack and moving slightly to the left, so as to receive the card more readily.

Then the right hand moves over the pack and deposits the card upon it, thus bringing the chosen card to the top of the pack. If the fingertips of the left hand are moistened slightly before the trick begins, the manipulation will be easier.

The whole sleight is accomplished while turning the body to the left. The movement requires considerable practice, for while the idea is quickly grasped, smoothness will be lacking until the sleight is thoroughly mastered.

The "Side Steal" is extremely useful when the magician wishes to palm off a card that has been selected, for the card may be palmed directly from the center of the pack, without bringing it to the top.



Left fingers sliding the card from the center of the pack into the right hand. View from below.

8. Color Changes

The "Color Change" is one of the most illusive of all card sleights. The magician, by merely passing his hand over the card on the face of the pack, changes that card to an entirely different one, and then shows his hand empty. So effective is this sleight that the spots of one card often appear to melt into those of the other.

There are several methods of the "Color Change," but they all follow the same principles. The pack is held in the left hand, while

the right is shown empty. Then, in momentarily approaching the pack, the right hand secretly removes one or more cards from the back of the pack, and, immediately passing over the face of the pack, leaves the card (or cards) there.

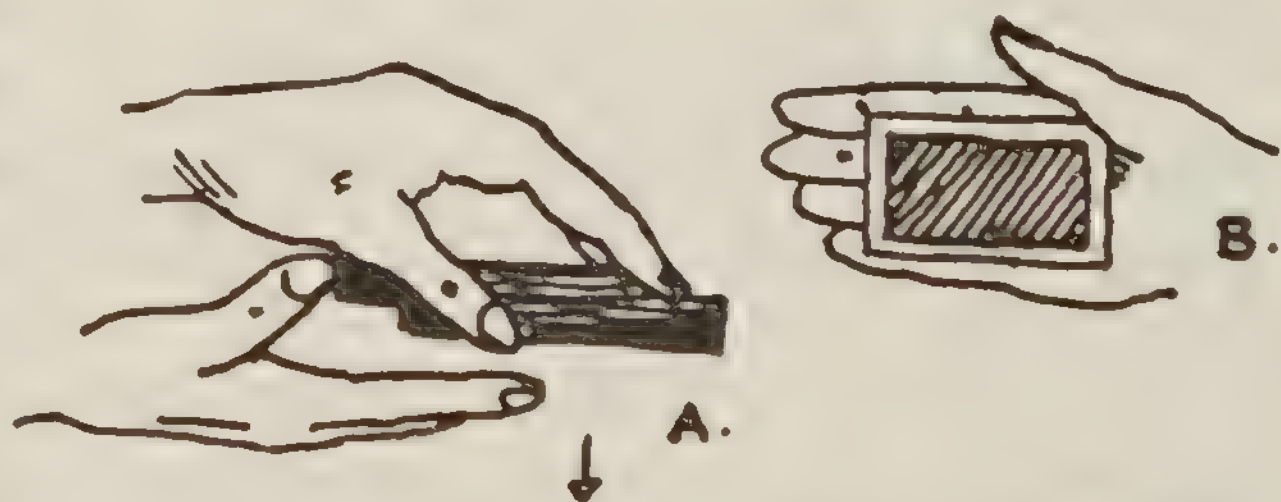
The beauty of the "Color Change" lies in the fact that the audience expects the right hand to *remove* cards from the face of the pack, instead of *adding* them. Therefore, if the magician can neatly "steal" or draw off the cards from the back, he will find the trick highly effective. There are two outstanding methods of performing the "Color Change," and the following explanations give certain important details hitherto unpublished.

(a) *The "Thumb Steal"*: The pack is held in the left hand; the fingers are at one side and the thumb at the other. The pack is held with the thumb side up, the face of the pack being towards the audience.

The tip of the left forefinger is placed upon the further end of the pack, at the rear. The right hand is then brought forward. The right fingers are laid upon the face card of the pack, but they do not entirely cover the card. The magician remarks that he has only partly covered the card, and, therefore, nothing will happen.

At that instant, the left forefinger slides back a number of

cards, and they come directly into the fork of the right thumb, the right hand is drawn backwards, carrying the hidden cards, and is immediately passed over the face of the pack, depositing the cards there.



A—How the hands are held for the "Thumb Steal." This is a top view with the arrow pointing to the spectators. B—How the cards are taken away in the right hand.

IMPORTANT POINTS: The cards should be received with as little motion of the right thumb as is possible.

Do not bend the right thumb in out of sight. It should be visible above the right hand.

Do not attempt to press the cards flat into the palm of the right hand. They should extend to the rear at an angle.

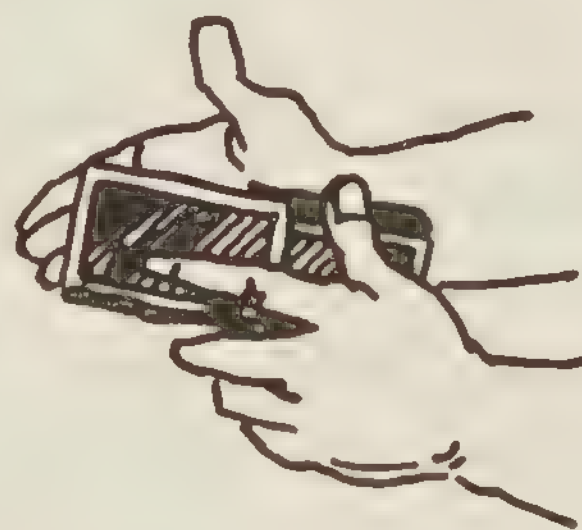
(b) *The Palm Change:* The pack is held in the left hand as previously described. The right hand is shown empty, then it takes the pack, with the face towards the right palm, fingers at one end, thumb at the other (just as in the "False Shuffle").

The left hand is shown empty, the magician turning so his left side faces the audience.

Then the magician turns his body so the right side faces the audience. And, in so doing, he makes a most artistic "steal" of a card from the back of the pack.

When he is directly facing the audience, the left hand takes the sides of the pack in the manner described in the "Thumb Steal," but the left forefinger is on the back of the rear card. The left forefinger pushes the card forward into the bend of the right fingers. The thumb and remaining fingers of the left hand withdraw the bulk of the pack, the first finger pressing against the single card until the instant the pack clears the inner end of it.

By this time, the magician's right side is towards the audience. The left hand is then extended, exhibiting the pack. The right hand, with the single card palmed, passes over the face of the pack and leaves the card there.



How the card is palmed in the right hand. Notice the manner in which the left forefinger pushes the card. View from in back.

Just before passing the right hand over the face of the pack the knuckles of the right hand should tap the inner end of the pack, as though to square it up. This is a very natural movement that helps in the illusion.

In drawing the right hand over the face of the pack, the magician may deposit the single card, and also make the "Thumb Steal." Then he can pass his hand over the pack immediately and show another change. This is called the "Double Color Change."

B. SLEIGHT OF HAND TRICKS

Now comes the application of the simpler sleights just explained. The "Color Change" is, of course, a trick in itself; the other sleights are merely parts towards completed effects.

1. The Mystic Aces

The magician turns the face of the pack towards the audience and exhibits the ace of diamonds. He turns the pack face down, and slides the ace on the table. Then he shows the ace of clubs on the face, and repeats; next comes the ace of hearts and finally the ace of spades, all being laid in a row.

Now in showing these "aces" the magician holds his fingers over the ends of the pack, and does so very carelessly, so that the spectators see that the cards are not aces, but treys (threes). This is particularly true of the ace of spades. For while every ace of spades has a big ornamental spot, the ace shown by the magician has just a tiny center spot.

The magician announces that he will make the aces change into threes. The spectators laugh, and say that the cards are not aces to begin with. So the magician turns the four cards up, and lo! They *are* the four aces!

The laugh is on the audience. The magician turns the aces faces

down and asks what cards the spectators thought they were. The answer is "Threes."

"So they are," says the magician. "Turn them up."

Some one does so, and the cards *are* threes!

To perform this trick, first remove the threes and the aces. On the bottom of the pack put a three, then an ace, then a three, an ace, and so on, going towards the top of the pack.

Now hold the pack between the hands, and clumsily show the face card, trying to hide the end pips. Call the card an ace. Turn the pack face down, and when you apparently remove the bottom card, push it back slightly with the right fingers and draw out the card above it. This is called the "Slide." So when you seem to put the three-spot on the table, face down, you are really depositing an ace.

As though cutting the pack, pull off the bottom card (three-spot) and put it on the top. You are then ready to exhibit another three-spot, pretending that it is an ace. Repeat the "Slide," and bring the three-spot to the top.

You do this manoeuvre four times in all, and at the finish, you have the four treys on top of the pack, with the four aces on the table.

When the four aces are turned up, the spectators will be amazed, for they think the cards are four treys. In the meantime, calmly arrange the four treys on top of the pack so that they project an inch to the right.

The audience thinks the trick is over, for they realize that they have been "sold." So, without saying anything, merely pick up the four aces, hold them in a little heap, face down, and bring them over to the pack. No one will be looking at your hands, as every one is enjoying a laugh, and you can deliberately execute the "Bottom Change" leaving the four aces beneath the pack, and drawing away the four treys. Without any comment, lay the four treys in a row on the table, and, as though resuming the trick, say:

“Well, here *are* the four aces, just as I said, and I can proceed with the trick. By the way, what did you think the cards were, if not aces?”

“Three-spots,” answers some one, and you show that the cards are treys after all.

This trick is very simple, exceedingly bold, and highly effective, for it is a “sucker” trick, a type of magical experiment that can always be shown with good results.

2. The Cards Up the Sleeve

The “Twelve Cards Up the Sleeve” is a classic of conjuring. Nowadays, when magic, like everything else, must not be too deliberate, the trick is more effective when performed with seven cards. I will describe the procedure for the seven card method.

The magician counts off seven cards, and spreads them in a fan, between his hands, counting them. In so doing, he inserts the third finger of his left hand below the fourth card from the top of the packet. He squares up the packet and leaves the cards in the left hand.

The right hand draws out the right trouser pocket, and the magician, with a smile, says: “My pocket is empty—as always.” Turning towards the left, the right hand approaches the left and in covering the packet palms the four top cards. The right hand immediately takes hold of the remaining cards (as described under the “Palm”). The left hand is shown empty, and the magician says: “I will place the seven cards in my left hand.” But the left hand merely takes the packet of three. The right hand immediately pushes the trouser pocket back in, and leaves the four palmed cards in the pocket.

The left hand snaps its packet, and the right hand being first shown empty, goes into the pocket and brings out a card.

Another snap, and another card arrives in the pocket.

“This is very simple,” says the magician. “The cards run up my left

sleeve, across my back and down into my pocket.”

He snaps the left hand packet and takes the third card from his right pocket.

“Three cards have passed over,” announces the magician, “which leaves four in the left hand. I will count them.”

By means of the “False Count,” he makes the three cards in the left hand appear to be four. Then, showing his right hand empty, he snaps the three cards in his left and very deliberately takes a card from the pocket with the right hand. He immediately counts the left hand packet, and shows that only three cards remain.

The magician pauses a moment, and then, smiling, with his eyes on the audience, he deliberately squares up the cards in the left hand; in so doing, he inserts his left third finger under the two top cards and palms them in the right.

The left hand is immediately extended, as though holding three cards instead of one. The thumb snaps the single card, and the right hand, going directly to the pocket, comes out with one card, leaving the other in the pocket.

Again the left hand snaps the single card, and the right hand brings a card from the pocket. Then the single card is shown in the left hand—the only card left!

The single card is laid crosswise on the left palm. The magician faces the audience and then turns to the left. As he does so, he places his right hand over the card, with the aid of the left finger, and palms it. Under cover of the right hand, the left hand is turned back towards the audience, as though it held the card. The right hand strokes the back of the left,¹ then the right hand goes to the pocket, and, as the left hand is squeezed and shown empty, the right hand brings the palmed card from the pocket.

¹At this point the right thumb may temporarily bend in the upper end of the card, allowing the right fingers to be spread. As the right hand is kept in motion, the absence of the thumb will not be noticed.

3. The Twenty Card Trick

This experiment also has a history. It has been explained before, but as the trick depends upon one important movement, it is described herewith, for previous explanations have not included the latest method of performing the key sleight.

Ten cards are counted on the magician's left hand, and ten upon his right. The ten cards on the right are wrapped in a handkerchief, which is held by a person on the extreme right. One by one cards leave the left hand packet until just seven cards remain. When the handkerchief is opened, thirteen cards are inside!

The secret of the trick lies in the invisible transfer of three cards from the left hand to the right. Formerly this was done boldly, in full view of the audience. But the new method supplies such ample misdirection that even a beginner can perform it successfully.

When the cards are counted on the left hand, the magician asks for seven cards. As they lie crosswise on his left hand, he bends the sides of the cards so that they hump up in the center. Then he says: "Count three more. I want ten, altogether." So three more cards go upon the seven.

Then the magician lays a handkerchief over his left elbow, and has ten cards counted on his outstretched right hand.

The hands are kept well apart, and the magician walks to the person at the extreme right. As soon as he reaches that person, the magician says: "Take the handkerchief, please."

At the same instant he turns his left side towards the person and thrusts his left elbow under the person's nose. This sudden extension of the left elbow



Shifting three cards in the "Twenty Card Trick." The left arm is thrust forward with a handkerchief on the elbow just as the change is made.

brings the left hand directly over the right, and holding the seven bent cards with his left fingers, the magician calmly lets the three loose cards slide on to the right hand packet.

The instant the spectator takes the handkerchief, the magician again faces the audience holding his hands far apart. He gives the right hand packet (thirteen cards, supposedly ten) to the man who has the handkerchief, and tells him to wrap up his "ten" cards.

When this is done, the magician flips the left hand packet, and tells a card to pass. He says that only nine remain, and he counts them. By means of the "False Count," he makes the seven cards appear to the nine.

Another flip, and another card passes. By means of the "False Count," the magician shows that he now has "eight" cards.

He hands the "eight" cards to a person, and pretends to take a card from the little packet, tossing it towards the handkerchief. The spectator is told to count the packet, and he finds only seven cards! When the handkerchief is opened, the man holding it counts out thirteen cards for himself!

The use of the handkerchief in this experiment not only renders the trick more simple, it also makes the misdirection one hundred per cent perfect.

The magician, in making each card pass, may employ the "Color Change." He pretends to draw a card off the face of the pack, and as another card is left there, it seems as though the face card has been taken away in the right hand. Then the right hand is formed into a fist and a throwing motion is made towards the handkerchief, the right hand being shown empty.

When performing either the "Cards Up The Sleeve" or the "Twenty Card Trick" on a platform, a drum should be boomed, or a deep note struck on the piano, every time a card is supposed to pass.

4. The Four Aces

The four aces are laid faces down on the table. The magician picks them up and places them on the pack. He makes a fancy motion, and deals the aces on the table. He asks if every one is sure they are the aces. The answer is "No," so the magician calmly picks up the aces and shows that they are aces.

He repeats this, and the second time, nearly every one is sure that the cards are aces, but to be fair, he picks them up, shows them and puts them on the pack again.

He immediately lifts up the aces, and takes along the *fifth* card of the pack (the card just below the aces). He raises the little packet, and lets the people catch a glimpse of the odd card. Then he drops the packet on the pack and deals off the aces.

This time, no one will believe that the cards are the aces. While the storm of protest is on, the magician calmly palms three cards in his right hand, and holds the pack in his right hand. Then, with his left hand, he calmly turns up the four cards on the table, and shows that they are aces.

He turns the aces faces down and starts to slide them into a little pile (with the left hand). Then the left hand takes the pack, and the right hand, to complete the piling of the aces, is deliberately laid upon them. The fingers of the right hand are spread the instant that it touches the table. Thus the three palmed cards are neatly and artistically added to the aces. The pile is immediately gathered up and placed on the pack.

With no more comment, the magician deals off the four top cards of the pack, which the audience will now believe are aces, although only the fourth card dealt is an ace. As he deals the fourth card the magician lets it fall off the edge of the table. It drops to the floor, and in picking it up to lay it face down on the table, the spectators catch a glimpse of it, and see that it is an ace. So they

have no further doubt that all the cards are aces.

The magician then deals the three top cards of the pack (three aces) on the genuine ace. He deals three more cards on each of the remaining single cards. Thus the audience supposes that there are four aces lying on the table, with three indifferent cards on each, whereas there are really four aces in one pile.

The magician arranges the piles in a row, taking care to put the ace pile next to one end. Then he says: "Give me any number between one and four." Of course he hears "two" or "three." Counting from the proper end of the row, he ends his count on the pile of aces. He pushes that heap aside. Then he flips each of the remaining heaps and throws the cards faces up. No aces among them! And when the chosen pile is turned over, it contains all the aces!

5. The Card in the Pocket

The magician gives the pack to a person and tells him to note any card at any number down in the pack, while the magician's back is turned.

Then the magician takes the pack, puts it behind his back, removes a card and puts it in his pocket.

"What number down was your card?" asks the magician.

"Twelve," answers the spectator.

The magician counts down to the twelfth card and tosses it on the table. It is not the spectator's card. The magician reaches in his pocket and brings out the chosen card!

The card which the magician originally placed in his pocket was the top card of the pack. In counting down to twelve, the magician counted each succeeding card on top of the one before. So after he had counted off eleven, the spectator's card was the top card of those in the right hand.

The magician pushed the next card off the pack, and of course it was not the chosen card. While the spectator was looking at it, the magician laid the eleven cards back on the pack, palmed off the top card, and putting his hand in his pocket, brought it out. The card originally placed in the pocket was left there to be obtained later.

6. Card Discoveries

Methods of "discovering" a chosen card, when it has been secretly brought to the top of the pack.

(1) Secretly attach a dab of wax to the back of the top card. Toss the pack squarely against the ceiling, and the card will remain there.

(2) Hold the pack firmly between the left thumb and forefinger, the thumb above. The pack is face up. Let a person strike the cards and knock them to the floor. The chosen card will remain in your hand.

(3) Show three or four different cards to the spectator. None of them is his card. Palm off the top card and hand the pack to the spectator, telling him to find his card. It is not there, and you draw it from your pocket.

NOTE: If you have "lost" a chosen card, you can ask what it is, and looking through the pack, slide it to the top. Palm off the card, and say you can't find it in the pack. Then find it in your pocket.

(4) Push the top card an inch over the side of the pack. Drop the pack to the floor and the chosen card will turn up on top.

(5) Hold the pack in the right hand, with thumb across the center of the pack. Push the top card up on the finger-tips. Slide the pack along the table or the floor, and air pressure will turn the chosen card up in the center of the pack. This needs practice.

(6) Ask a person at what number down he wishes the chosen

card to come. Suppose he says "Ten." Count off ten cards one at a time on the table. Show the tenth card. It is not the chosen one. Pick up the ten cards, and the chosen card will now be on the bottom of them. Lay the ten cards on the pack; riffle the pack, and command the chosen card to appear at the tenth down. Let a spectator count the cards and he will find the right card at number ten.

(7) Hold up a card taken from the center of the pack. No one recognizes it as the chosen card. By means of the "Top Change" or the "Bottom Change" transform the card into the chosen one.

(8) Allow yourself to be blindfolded. Spread the cards all over the table with both hands. By peering down the sides of your nose, you can keep sight of the chosen card, and your hands also can keep constantly touching it. After every one is satisfied that the cards are mixed, take a knife and bring it point down among the cards. Pretend to strike at random, but aim for the chosen card, and bring it up on the point of the knife. This trick is simple but must be presented as a very deep mystery. Three or four cards may be used.

C. ADVANCED SLEIGHTS AND FLOURISHES

1. The Pass

The "Pass," while not essential to the average card performer, is a most useful sleight. It is nothing more than an invisible cut.

For example: suppose that a chosen card is placed in the center of the pack. If the magician cuts the pack just above the chosen card, he will bring the chosen card to the top. But the spectators would detect the cutting of the pack. The "Pass," however, renders the cutting unnoticeable.

In practicing the "Pass," it is advisable to use narrow cards (Bridge cards, or French size cards). Once the beginner has mastered the

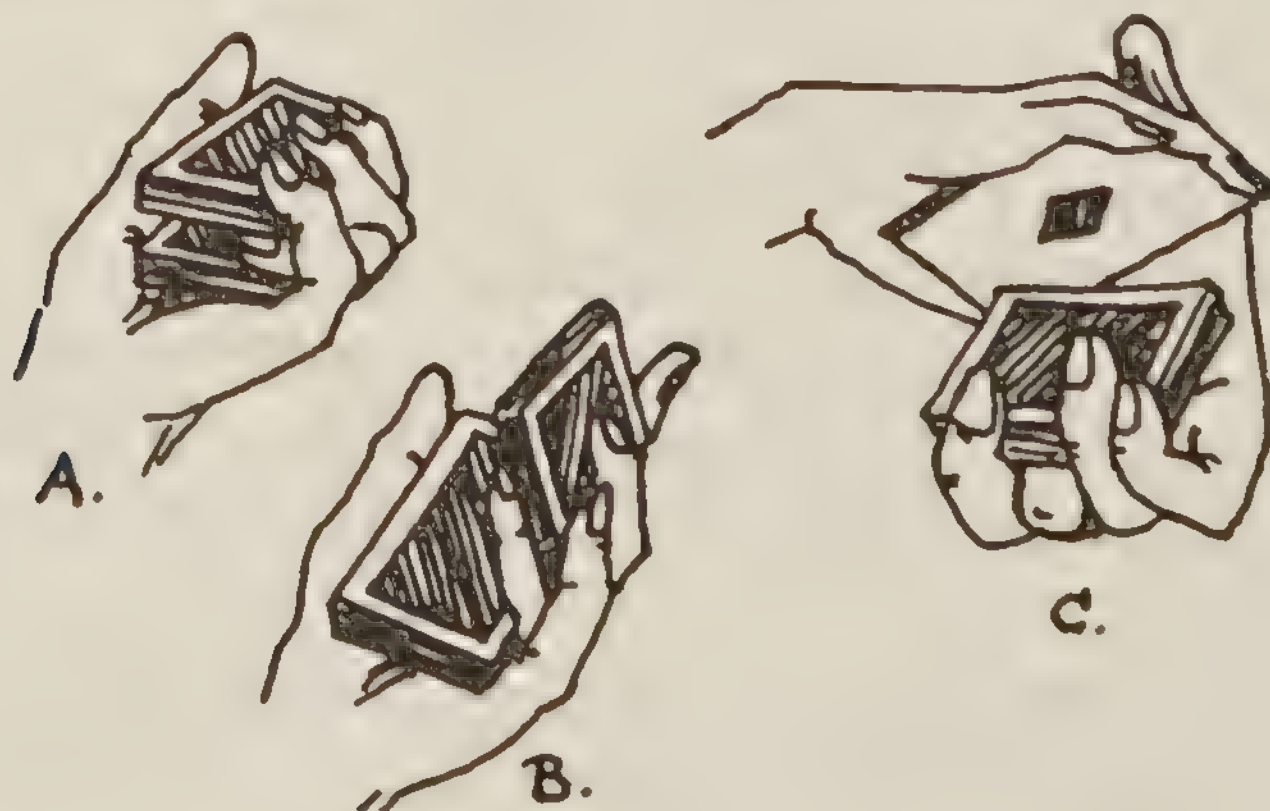
movement with those cards, he can readily adapt it to the full width pack.

Most descriptions of the "Pass" advise the student to use the little finger as the principal aid to the sleight. That is a great mistake, for the little finger does not possess the strength nor the position to properly control the cards. That is why so many people never learn the "Pass." By using the *third* finger, the operation is simplified.

Spread the cards in a fan between the hands, and consider one card to be a chosen card, returned to the pack. Close up the fan, and insert the third finger of your left hand just above the chosen card. The lower half of the pack is now lying crosswise in the left hand, while the upper section is gripped with the third finger beneath and the other fingers above. (See Fig. A.)

You can now open the pack like a book by merely extending the fingers of the left hand. Practice that a number of times until the movement becomes natural. (See Fig. B.)

Now grip the lower section of the pack with the right hand, the fingers at the outer end and the thumb at the inner end, near the inner left corner. The left thumb should press firmly against the joint of the right forefinger. Hold the lower packet with the extreme tips of the right fingers and thumb.



Now raise the upper packet by extending the left fingers. Press the left side of the lower half firmly against the fork of the left thumb, and raise the right hand a trifle. At the same time, release the pressure of all the right fingers with the exception of the forefinger, which presses the outer end firmly while the right thumb presses the inner end. The lower half of the pack will swing upward, as though on a pivot, and will be lifted above the upper half, which is immediately placed underneath the pack by bending in the left fingers. (Fig. C.)

The "Pass" is thus completed. At first it will be slow and unwieldy. After a time, constant practice will enable the performer to accomplish the movement in a fraction of a second—so rapidly that the two halves will seem to pass through one another.

Points to avoid:

(1) Do not extend the left fingers too far. Let them go just so far that the passage of the upper packet will rub against the third finger of the left hand.

(2) Do not draw the lower packet straight up. It must swing up as though on a pivot.

(3) Do not use the fingers of the right hand to lever up the lower packet, although this is somewhat excusable, as many skilled performers do it. The levering should be done by the left thumb, and pressure against it.

(4) Do not let the left thumb leave its original position.

(5) Do not let the hands draw apart.

Some performers execute the pass with the hands at a standstill, others try to mask the movement with a jerky up and down motion of the hands. The former method is too exacting; the latter is too crude. The most practical method is to begin with the cards in front of the body. As soon as the hands have squared up the cards, and are in position, the magician turns to the left, and walks to the table, making the pass as he does so. Or he may, immediately after swinging his arms

towards the left, begin to shuffle the pack. If the cards are brought from a horizontal to a vertical position, during this easy, natural swing, the pass will be invisible. The hands should be held low at the beginning of the sleight, for the danger lies in some one seeing the cards from beneath.

There are several "False Passes," which may be termed corollaries of the genuine "Pass."

In one method, the magician is all ready for the "Pass," when he raises his right hand, carrying the lower section of the pack, and points at the person who chose the card. The magician says: "Be sure and remember your card." Then he replaces the lower portion on the upper. This is not really a sleight at all; it is just a "bluff" that will succeed if boldly done.

Another "False Pass" is quite effective.

Lay the lower portion of the pack crosswise on the left hand. Carry the upper section over and to the left of the lower half, at the same time press on the right side of the lower half, with the left finger-tips. The lower half is tilted up, and the upper half is inserted beneath it. The movement does not stop here. The pack is in a horizontal position, and it is turned around like a wheel two or three times, between the hands, as though the cards were being squared up. This makes the whole movement quite natural, and the effect is illusive. The right hand should hold the upper portion between the tips of the thumb and forefinger, the forefinger at the outer right corner, the thumb at the inner right. The fingers of the right hand will then mask the tilting of the lower packet.

This sleight, properly executed, is really more than a "False Pass."

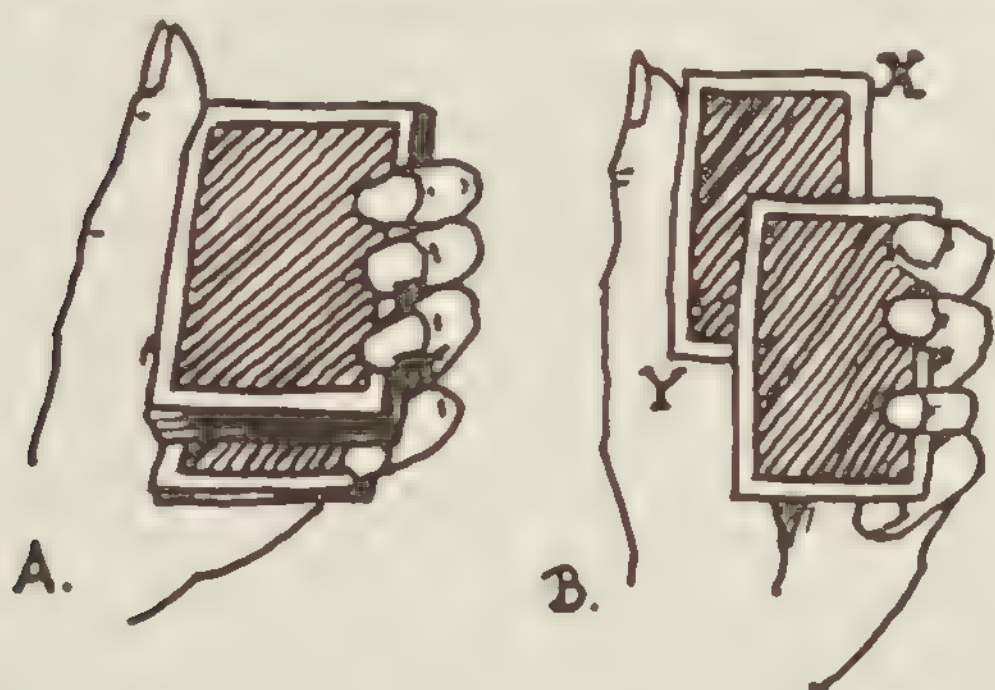
The "Glimpse" is an unfinished form of the "Pass." In performing it, the left third finger is inserted below the chosen card. The magician starts the "Pass." In performing it, the left third finger is inserted below the chosen card. The magician starts the "Pass," but stops and

squares up the pack. The slight separation of the two halves of the pack enables him to glimpse and remember the selected card.

2. A New Pass

This "Pass" is, I believe, the invention of Milton Brooks, of Boston, who performs it perfectly, and who has taught it to a number of pupils.

The hands are held in position for the regular "Pass," but the little finger is inserted between the two halves, instead of the third finger.



A—How the pack is held in the left hand, with the little finger separating the top and bottom portions. B—Second position of the cards. The right hand should be covering the pack at this point, but it is omitted so that the cards can be seen. The right thumb should be at the corner of the lower packet marked Y. The fingers are at the other end, the third finger pressed against the corner marked X.

right thumb is stopped by the left thumb. The tip of each thumb touches the fork of the other. The lower packet is now well in advance of the upper, which is hidden by the right wrist.

The third finger of the right hand levers up the outer right hand corner of the lower packet. As only the inner right corner of the lower

From that point on, the left hand remains perfectly flat, palm up, the right hand doing all the work.

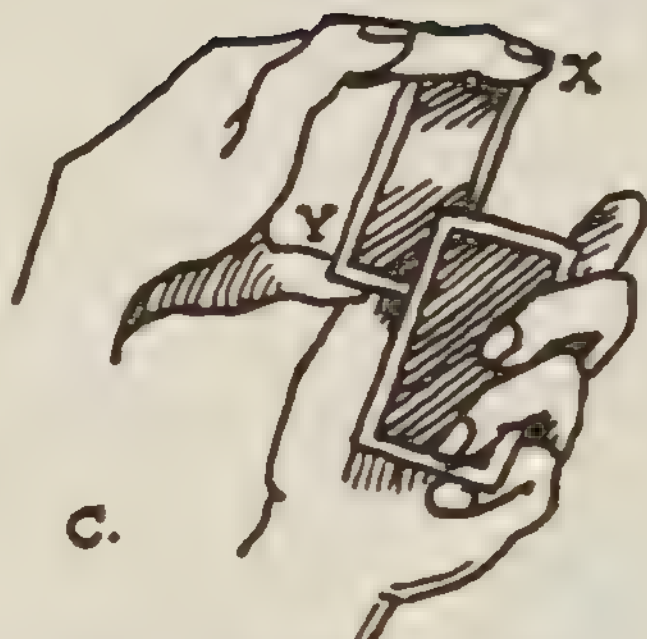
The right hand, holding the lower packet, moves to the left, until the right thumb is clear of the upper packet. (The right thumb is, of course, pressing the extreme left inner corner of the upper packet.)

The right hand is pushed forward, carrying the lower packet, until the

packet is below the outer left corner of the upper, this leverage instantly transposes the two sections of pack. The left fingers (all except the little one) are on top of the upper heap, and they assist slightly in the manipulation. The right hand immediately draws its section inward and deposits it upon the left hand's packet.

The cards are always in a horizontal position. The sleight is started with the arms well extended, and is executed as the hands are drawn in towards the body.

The less friction between the two sections as they pass, the better will be the sleight.



C—The shift. The right third finger is levering up the corner marked X. Note the thumb at Y. Observe how only the corners of the packets have to pass.

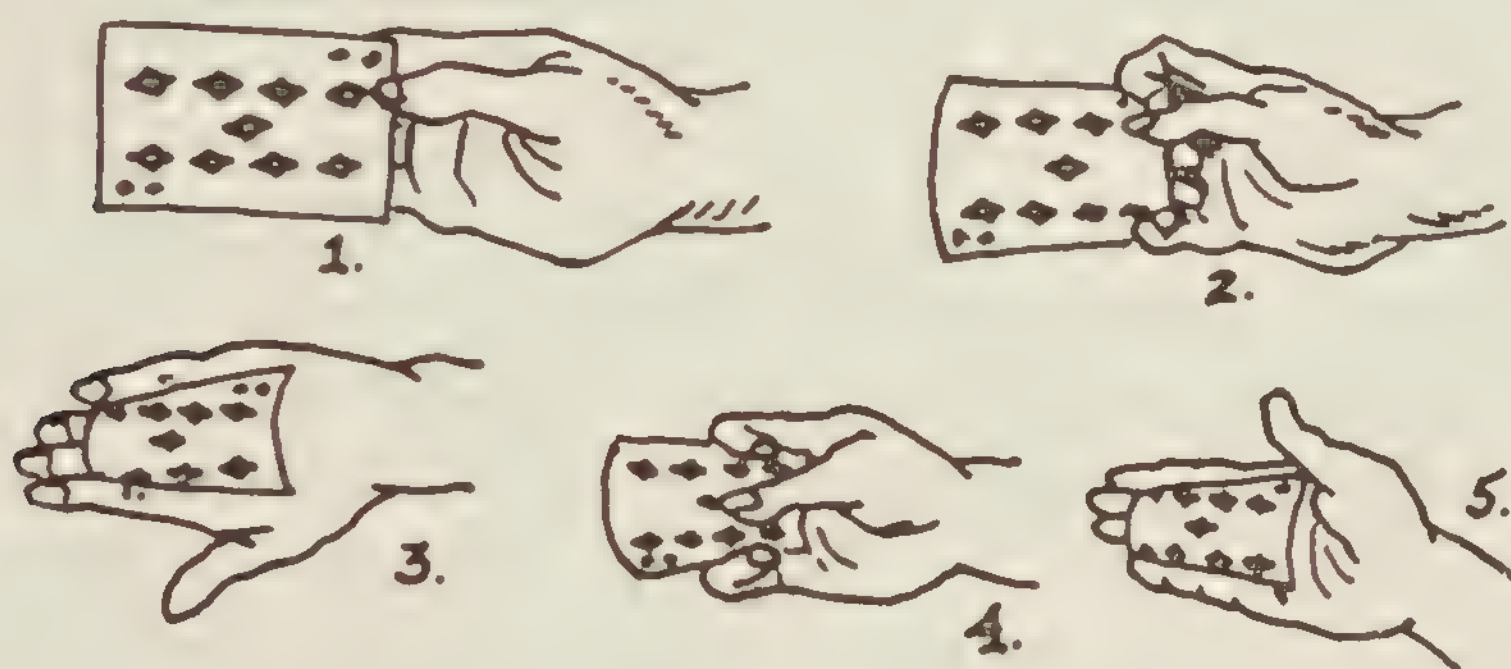
3. The Back and Front Palm

By means of this sleight, a card is made to vanish from the hand, and after both sides of the hand are shown, the card is reproduced at the finger-tips.

The card is held between the tips of the middle finger and the thumb. The first and little fingers then grip the edges of the card. The middle fingers are brought down under the card, and thumb and fingers are extended, and the card is clipped between the first and second fingers on one side, and the third and fourth fingers on the other, so that when the palm of the hand is held towards the audience, the card will be out of sight behind the hand.

To reverse the card so that the back of the hand may be shown: the fingers bend forward so that the thumb can press upon the middle of the face of the card. The fingers are opened outward until they reach

the other end and can again clip the card, but this time the card will be within the hand, and the back may be shown. A reversal of the procedure will bring the card once more to the back of the hand.



(1) Card held in position for the vanish. (2) Fingers gripping edges of the card. (3) Hand straightened with card concealed in back. (4) Shifting the card from back to front, the thumb holding the card while the fingers are extended. (5) Card in the palm of hand. Back of hand should be held towards the audience.

Now these movements are *not* hard to learn, but after they have been mastered, the person trying them will find that no matter how smoothly and rapidly he may execute the sleight, his audience will always catch a glimpse of the card as he turns it over to show the back, or turns it from back to front. The trick is absolutely worthless unless the turnover is properly executed, and virtually all writers have neglected to explain how the hand may be turned.

When the card is in back of the hand, hold the palm towards the audience with the fingers straight down. Now, instead of bending the fingers into the palm, bend the palm *down to the fingers*. This brings the back of the hand (below the knuckles) towards the audience, with the knuckles up, and the card extending straight towards the rear. It is not a very comfortable position, but it does not have to be maintained for long. The fingers are immediately extended, and are raised until they

point straight up. Then the back of the hand may be shown from any position.

To bring the card to the back of the hand, so that the palm may again be shown: start with the fingers straight up and the back of the hand towards the audience. Lower the hand a trifle, bend in the fingers (aided by the thumb) transferring the card to the back of the hand, and extend the fingers straight downward. The palm may then be shown.

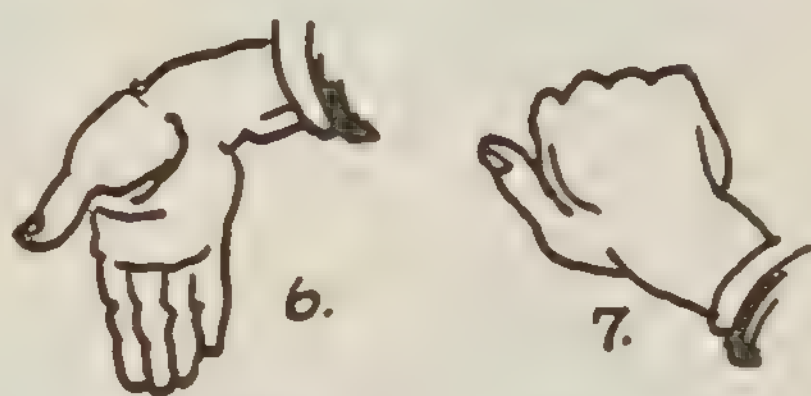
To catch the card from the air, press the thumb against the index corner that protrudes between the tips of the first and second fingers. Draw the side of the card in between the first and second fingers, and snap the card (by means of the thumb) over into the palm of the hand, where it is caught between the thumb and tips of the fingers.

NOTE: Some magicians shift the card from back to front without the aid of the thumb. That does not add to the effectiveness of the trick, but makes it more liable to failure.

Study all the positions, particularly that of the turnover, before a mirror, and the sleight may gradually be perfected.

The disappearance of four, five or six cards, and their single reproduction requires much more practice. It is simply a case of training the hands. The procedure is the same as with the single card, but the magician must learn to "back palm" each successive card without losing hold of the others; he must be able to turn over the group of cards as he would turn one card, and he must learn to produce one card without losing hold of the others.

To do this, slightly bend all the fingers except the forefinger, which must remain extended.



(6) First position of the hand during the transfer of the card from back to front. (7) Second position of the hand during the transfer of the card. The card extends straight out in back.

Cards with flesh-colored or plaid backs are best. Cards with a white margin are to be avoided. Highly glazed cards are liable to prove troublesome; as cards are used they become more pliable, and they are easier to perform with. The author has practiced with a well-worn pack of pink-backed "Steamboat" cards, until he can perform the turnover with an entire pack of fifty-two cards, and produce them one by one, constantly showing both sides of the hand. The vanishing of a large number of cards is, however, a much more difficult matter, but there is no reason why any one who is willing to practice considerably cannot learn to manipulate from six to ten cards with ease.

Flourishes

Ornamental flourishes with the cards are not tricks, they are merely feats of jugglery. They are interesting to watch, and worth while learning.

Some years ago, a writer on magic decried the use of flourishes, saying that they made the audience belittle the subsequent efforts of the magician. Other writers have held to the same opinion, but their arguments are not applicable to the magician.

The magician's purpose is to entertain as well as to mystify. People like to see card flourishes. Therefore they should be used.

The magician is not pretending to be a supernatural being, when he performs card tricks. No one ever heard of an ancient wizard who performed wonders with a pack of cards. As soon as a magician picks up a pack of cards, his audience looks for clever feats of dexterity—not for miracles. Card flourishes are feats of dexterity, and they meet with the approval of the average person.

Furthermore, when people witness a card trick, they talk among themselves, and frequently try to explain it as being very simple—even though they have been thoroughly mystified. They will often belittle the work of a magician. But if the magician has previously exhibited some ornamental flourishes, the audience will already hold a high

opinion of his skill, and will consider every trick he does as being a demonstration of the highest skill.

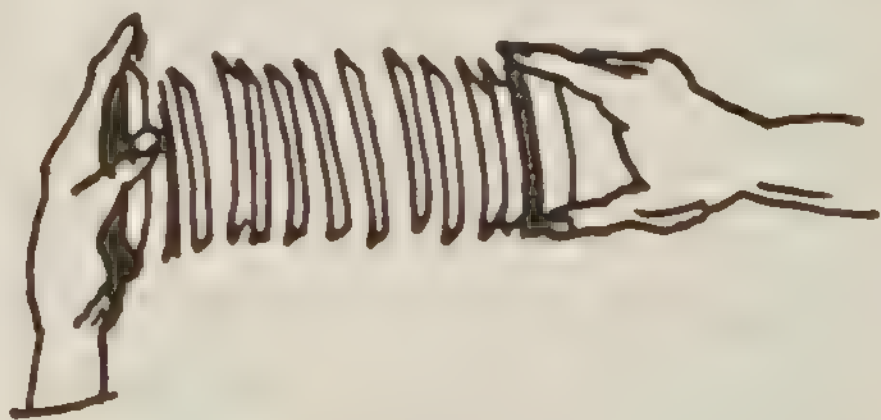
Therefore, the old argument against flourishes has been proven illogical. Every person who does any card tricks at all should seek to learn some flourishes—along with regular sleights. Every performance with cards should be prefaced by a few flourishes, for they create a professional atmosphere, they gain the attention of the audience, and they state—better than the magician could say it in words—that the audience is going to see some card manipulations of a high order, and not just a few card tricks. The man who tries to perform flourishes that he has seen magicians use, and who fails in the attempt, will certainly have a high opinion of the magicians' skill.

1. The Spring

This is the basis of all card flourishes. The cards are held in the right hand, between the tips of the second and third finger at the top, and the thumb at the bottom. If the thumb and fingers are pressed slowly together, they will bend the cards slightly, and the cards will spring away from the pack, into the left hand, which is held a few inches below the right. The whole pack may be sprung by continuing pressure.

The cards should be sprung off the tip of the thumb—not off the tips of the fingers, as the thumb affords better control.

After a little practice, the student will find that he can draw his hands apart to a distance of a foot or more, as he springs the cards, but as he finishes the spring, he should bring his hands rapidly together, trapping the cards between them.



Note how the right hand presses the cards.

The cards may be sprung straight downward, or at an angle across

the body. The flourish should be practiced over a couch to avoid picking cards off the floor, for the tyro is certain to meet with some failure. The "Spring" is not difficult, but it must be done correctly, and careful attention should be given to detail.

Having learned the "Spring" to a slight degree, the magician can easily spread the cards along his left arm. The cards cannot be spread smoothly except by means of the "Spring."

Set the right hand just above the left, and spring the cards slowly, letting them slide off the fingertips. At the same time draw the right hand along the left arm (which is held horizontally) and the cards will be neatly spread along the arm.

The cards may be spread from the left elbow to the left hand, by moving the right hand in the opposite direction; in this case the cards are sprung from the right thumb.

Drop the left forearm to a vertical position, and the row of cards will glide prettily down the arm into the left hand.

2. The Turnover

In this flourish, the cards are sprung from the tips of the left fingers to the left elbow (the springing being done with the right hand).

Then the fingers tip up the end cards and cause the whole row to turn over on the left arm. The right hand is at the left elbow, ready to catch any cards that may start to fall. The innermost card may be made to fall upon the right hand, which immediately slides up to the left wrist, scooping up the cards.



This illustration shows the cards spread along the arm.

A pretty, but rather difficult, finish to the turnover is to let the cards lie on the left arm. Then toss them a few inches in the air, and draw back the left hand rapidly, so that it will gather up the cards in one sweep.

The "Somersault" is a variation of the "Turnover" invented by the author. Hold the left arm straight out, and spread the cards from the shoulder to the elbow. The right hand turns over the row of cards towards the elbow, and just as the "Turnover" is completed, the arm is dropped to a vertical position, so that the cards will slide down the forearm into the left arm. This appears very difficult, but it is not.

The "Arm Turnover" is just the reverse. It looks easy, but is hard. Spread the cards along the back of the left forearm, from the elbow to the wrist and onto the left hand. Toss the cards a few inches in the air, and quickly turn over the arm, catching the row of cards on the forearm.

3. The Catch

There are various forms of the "Catch."

One is worked in connection with the "Turnover." Work the regulation "Turnover," but spread the cards short, and stop the turning when it is half done, so the cards will form a peak in the center, like the roof of a house. Then toss the cards in the air, and with the right hand catch the peak between the thumb and fingers. This is a very difficult flourish.

The easiest catch is to spread the cards along the left forearm, then toss them slightly in the air, and catch the whole falling row by sweeping *inward* with the right hand.

The cards are caught in the bend of the right fingers, aided by the right thumb; after a little practice, the row of cards can be let fall nearly to the floor.

In another catch, the cards are tossed a little higher, and are caught by shooting the right hand straight out, the thumb coming below the row of cards. This requires quick work on the part of the right hand.

The "One Hand Catch" is probably the most difficult of all. The cards are laid on the *back* of the left arm. Then they are tossed in the

air, the left arm is drawn back, and shot straight out, the left hand catching the row of falling cards. This should be practiced with a very short row of cards.

Some performers prefer to spread the cards from the elbow towards the hand, when they work these last two flourishes.

D. FURTHER CARD TRICKS

The following tricks depend upon the application of more advanced sleights.

1. Six Card Vanish and Production

This is simply the vanish and reproduction of six cards from the right hand, by means of the "Back and Front Palm." The cards are held in a fan in the left hand. The right hand takes them one at a time and vanishes them, then it reproduces them, the left hand forming the



Concealing the sixth card behind the other five.

cards into a fan as it takes each produced card from the right hand. As the *fifth* card is being placed in the left hand, the right fingers bend inward and leave the sixth card behind the fan in the left hand, where the card is held between the first and second fingers of the left hand. The right hand is then shown absolutely empty. As the right and left hands count the cards in the fan, to show that only five cards are there, the right hand "back palms" the sixth card and then catches it from the air.

2. Production and Vanish

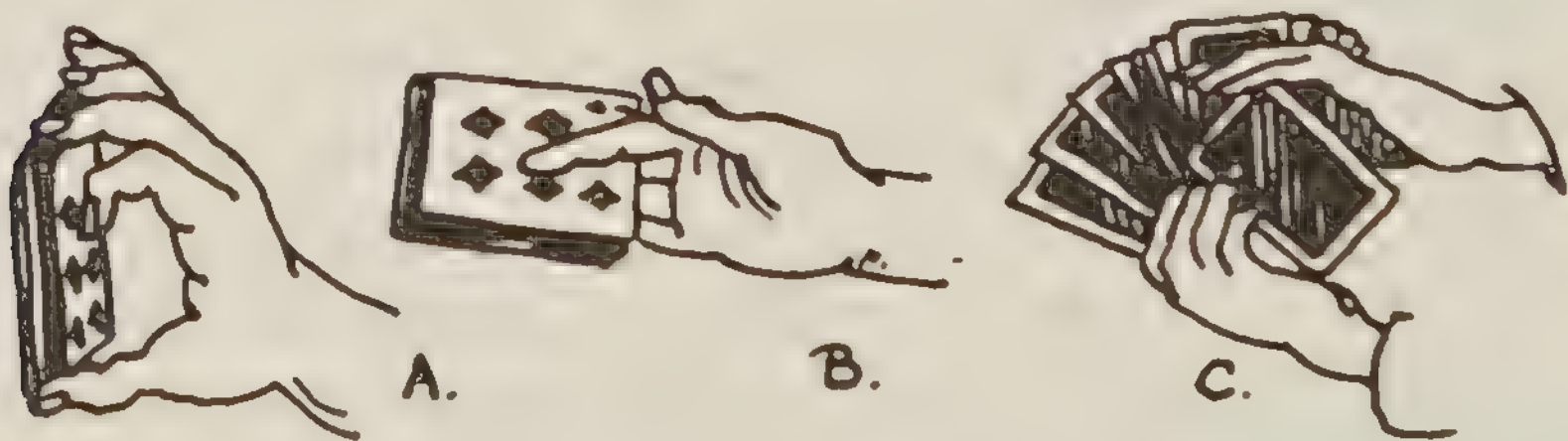
This is a very neat sleight. The pack is held face towards the audience, in the left hand.

The right hand approaches and obtains twenty or more cards, either

taking them from the face of the pack by the "Spring Palm," or from the rear, by means of the "Thumb Steal." (See "Color Changes," page 000.)

The right hand moves to the left elbow, and there the right forefinger is bent in against the index corner of the face of the pack. (See A.) The second finger bends in *back* of the cards. The cards are released from the palm, and they fly straight out between the tips of the first and second fingers. (See B.) The thumb presses the center of the cards, near the bottom, and moves to the right while the fingers move to the left, spreading the cards in a fan. Thus the cards are apparently drawn from the left elbow.

The fan in the right hand is brought over to the left hand cards, and as the fan passes in front of the left hand, the left hand cards are deposited in back of the fan, between the forefinger and second finger of the right hand. (See C.) The left hand is immediately turned back towards the audience, and is raised in the air. The right hand fans the left with the spread out cards, and the left hand is turned around—empty.



The pack is then gathered up between the hands, all the cards coming together.

The first part of this trick—the fan production—is useful in connection with "Flourishes." If the magician drops any cards during a "Flourish" he can nonchalantly produce a fan of cards from his elbow, to make up the deficit.

3. Single Card Production

Hold the pack in the left hand, face to the audience, and palm off a dozen or more cards in the right hand by the "Spring Palm," but take care that the inner corner of the cards is pressed into the fork of the thumb. (This is shown in the upper drawing.)



Extend the thumb well forward, and press the card nearest the thumb against the ball of the second finger. (See lower drawing.) Squeeze the hand, and the card will swing upward, as though on a pivot. It will snap right up in the air, and will apparently be produced at the tips of the right fingers (the back of the hand being towards the audience).



The rest of the cards can be produced in this manner, one by one. The movement requires a certain knack; once learned it works very smoothly and effectively. Use stiff cards.

4. The Card in the Cigarette

A card is selected by a member of the audience, who tears the card to pieces. He is allowed to keep a torn corner of the card. The magician puts the remaining pieces in his trouser pocket.

The magician borrows a pack of cigarettes and extracts one. He starts to light it, but the cigarette does not draw. He tears open the cigarette, and finds that it contains the chosen card, minus one corner. He pulls out his pocket, and it is empty. The card has been restored! And the torn corner, held by the spectator, fits the restored card exactly!

Preparation: The magician has a duplicate card with a corner torn out. The card is moistened and rolled into a tight cylinder, the length of a cigarette. A cigarette is emptied of its tobacco, and the paper is

slipped around the pencil, with the aid of which the card may be loaded into the empty cigarette. The dummy cigarette (with card rolled inside) and the torn corner are placed in the right vest pocket.

The magician forces the original card. While it is being torn, he palms the corner of the duplicate. He takes the torn pieces, adds the duplicate corner, and gives it to some one to hold. Then he puts the torn pieces of the original card in his trouser pocket, thrusting them up into the corner of the pocket.

The magician asks for a pack of cigarettes. He palms the dummy cigarette, in his right hand. He takes the pack of cigarettes in his left hand and lays it upon the palmed cigarette. He apparently draws a cigarette from the pack with his left hand, but he really pulls up the dummy cigarette from in back of the pack. The illusion is perfect.

When the pocket is pulled out, the torn pieces will not be seen. When the cigarette is unrolled, it contains the "restored" card, which, of course, fits the corner held by the spectator.

5. The Card in the Orange

This is a variation of the preceding trick. The restored card is found in the center of an orange.

Preparation: Remove the little stem from the orange, cut through the skin, and remove the pulp in the center. Insert the rolled up card and replace the stem. The orange is ready for the trick.

SECTION III

Magic with Small Apparatus

Magic with Small Apparatus

THIS SECTION OF THE BOOK deals with tricks that are suitable for the magician who performs at close range. Some of them are also adapted to platform use, but in every case, the trick depends upon some form of special apparatus, or prepared materials.

Tricks with small apparatus are very effective, for the results are frequently much greater and more surprising than if unprepared articles alone were used. Furthermore, the use of apparatus sometimes takes the place of skill. There are, however, certain apparatus tricks which must be performed with dexterity, and the student of magic should never feel that he can depend upon a trick to do itself. Small apparatus usually serves an auxiliary purpose, aiding in the accomplishment of surprising mysteries, but practice should never be neglected.

CHAPTER I

Card Tricks

THERE ARE MANY, MANY TRICKS that require specially prepared cards. Ten or fifteen years ago, there was a wave of popularity over "mechanical card tricks." These were not cards that had some bit of mechanism attached to them: they were merely imitation cards, printed in ingenious ways, so that they could be used in various tricks.

Such cards are now passe, for they were sold by the thousands, and were often so poorly made that they "gave themselves away." The present tendency is towards special packs of cards that may be used in various tricks, and this chapter will deal with such cards exclusively.

Many books on magic have explained tricks with the "Wizard's Pack," or "Strippers." This is a pack of cards which has been cut so that the cards taper slightly. If a card is selected from the pack, and the pack is turned around before the chosen card is inserted, the chosen card will project at the sides of the pack, near one end, and the magician can instantly locate it. There are some good tricks with "Strippers," but the pack deserves no more than a passing mention, for its uses have been explained in other volumes. "Strippers" are sold with complete directions by all magical dealers, and in recent years, new principles have been applied to mechanical packs.

Most notable of all the new developments is:

1. The Self-Forcing Pack

This pack of cards is sometimes called the "Svengali" pack. It consists of fifty-two cards, but every even card, counting from the bottom, is

the same. Thus there are twenty-six duplicates in the pack.

The duplicate cards are cut slightly shorter than the regular cards of the pack. Thus, when the magician holds the pack in his left hand, and riffles one end of the pack, all the cards will seem to be different, for only the long cards can be seen. Every time a long card slips from his finger, a short card follows it, and the face of the short card is not seen.

Suppose all the short cards are sixes of clubs. The magician shows the pack to be all different (apparently). As he riffles the cards he invites a spectator to insert his finger anywhere he wishes. The spectator's finger is bound to come upon a six of clubs, so when he withdraws that card and looks at it, the card has been "forced" upon him.

The use of the Svengali pack is, however, not restricted to forcing. In the first place the pack can be shuffled (by riffling the ends together), and it can also be cut in different heaps (by the ends). This does not disturb the arrangement, if carefully executed. Many tricks are possible with a Svengali pack.

For example: The magician may cut the pack into several heaps and let the spectator glance at the top card of a heap. The card will be the six of clubs. Then the magician gathers up the heaps. He asks the spectator to name any number, from one to fifty-two. If an odd number is given, the magician counts from the top of the pack to the chosen number and turns up the card. It will be a six of clubs—presumably *the* six of clubs! If an even number is chosen, the magician counts off that many cards, and turns up the *next* card, showing a six of clubs!

Another trick: The six of clubs is forced with the Svengali pack. Then the cards are dealt alternately in two heaps. A person is asked to select the left heap or the right heap. Whichever is named, the magician takes it to mean the heap which now has all the short sixes of clubs. He is blindfolded, and he throws a knife point down among the

cards of the chosen heap, which have been spread all over the floor. The knife sticks in a card. The magician picks up the knife and shows that he has stabbed the chosen card—the six of clubs!

Another excellent trick is to force a six of clubs and then have the pack wrapped in newspaper. A knife is thrust through the side of the paper dividing the pack in half. When the paper is removed, the six of clubs is found either above or below the knife blade!

In all these tricks, care must be taken not to reveal more than one six of clubs at a time.

The use of the Self-forcing pack is, however, restricted to one trick, for if different people took the same card every time, their suspicions would be aroused. So the magician can use it for one specific purpose, unless he has another similar pack available, with a different duplicate card. He may then substitute the second pack for the first and proceed with another trick.

2. The Self-Shifting Pack

This pack, known as the “Mene-Tekel Pack” may be used in two or three tricks. It enables the magician to bring a chosen card to the top of the pack, without any manipulation, thus eliminating all sleight of hand.

The pack consists of twenty-six different long cards, and twenty-six different short cards. Each long card has a duplicate among the short. The magician sets the pack so that each long card is followed by its short duplicate. He riffles the pack and allows a short card to be removed.

While the spectator still holds the chosen card, the magician quietly cuts the pack at the point from which the short card was taken. The short card may then be put anywhere in the pack: but its duplicate, a long card, *will be on top of the pack*, at the disposal of the magician.

If the pack is used too often without readjusting, there will be a

superabundance of short cards out of place in the pack.

A Mene-Tekel Pack can be made up from two ordinary packs, that have a “one-way” design, on the back. That is, a design which is different at opposite ends. In this case, the odd cards (from the bottom up) are set with the design towards the magician, and even cards (from the bottom of the pack up) with the design away from him.

The performer can riffle the pack; the cards will fall so fast that they will all seem to be different. Then he may fan the pack and let a card be chosen, cutting the card at the break.

If the design of the top card points towards the magician, he knows that the top card is the duplicate of the card taken by the chooser. If the top card points away from him, he knows that the duplicate card is on the bottom of the pack.

The spectator may put his card anywhere in the pack. The duplicate is where the magician can get it.

3. The Color Changing Pack

This is an unusual mechanical pack.

The cards are riffled showing the fronts, and cards of all suits are seen. The cards are riffled showing the backs, and the backs are seen to be blue.

The magician then riffles the pack with the faces showing and asks a person to call stop. When the call comes, the pack is cut, and the card below the cut is laid face up on the table. It happens to be a *black* card.

“Turn it over,” says the magician’ “and look at the blue back.”

The spectator does so, but finds that the back is red! The magician fans all the cards in the pack, and shows that the backs are now red; then he fans the faces and shows that only spades and clubs are in the pack, although the people will swear they saw cards of all suits!

The pack is made thus: every third card, beginning with the face of the pack, is black on the face and blue on the back. These cards are cut *short*.

The second, fifth, eighth, and so on are red cards with red faces. They are pasted to the blue cards at the bottom—a narrow strip of paste serving the purpose.

The third, sixth, ninth and so on are single cards—red backs with black faces. The top card of the pack has no face. It is double backed—blue on one side, red on the other.

The magician starts with the double card lying blue side up. He riffles the pack, and all the suits appear (only the faces of the long cards showing).

He shows the back of the pack, and riffles it as he did before, from front to back. Only the blue backs (short) then appear.

When he riffles and says stop, he always stops just after a blue-backed card, so he lifts the upper portion away, the blue-backed card coming with it, and puts the single card that is on top of the lower heap, on the table. He takes care not to show the back of the card. It has a black face and a red back.

When he tells the spectator to turn the card over and look at the back, the magician quietly turns over the double-backed card that is on top of the pack.

The people are surprised when they see the red-backed card. The magician *fans* the pack and runs it from hand to hand. Only the red backs show.

Then he turns the pack face up and fans it, running it from hand to hand. Only the black faces show.

4. The Revelation Pack

This is a new form of “long and short” pack originated by the author, and it is the first pack of the sort that can be completely shown, by fanning the cards. The pack has the regulation fifty-two cards; there are no duplicate cards in it.

The pack is divided into twenty-six pairs, as follows: Ace of

diamonds, four of clubs; eight of hearts, jack of spades; 7D, 10C; 4D, 7C; KD, AC; 9S, QH; 8S, JH; 9C, QD; 4S, 7H; KS, AH; 8C, JD; 3D, 6C; 2C, 5D; 2H, 5S; 8D, JC; 9D, QC; 7S, 10H; 9H, QS; 3H, 6S; 2D, 5C; 3C, 6D; 2S, 5H; 10S, KH; 3S, 6H; 10D, KC; AS, 4H.

In each pair, the card last named is a short card. These short cards are made by trimming down one end of the card, with a cutter, and then rounding off the edges.

The magician fans the pack, showing that it consists of fifty-two different cards. Then he riffles it, and lets a person put his finger in anywhere.

The card below the finger is removed, and it is a short card. The magician looks at the card above the break made by the spectator, and the *card he sees tells him what card the spectator took*.

Here is the system. A club indicates a diamond, or a diamond a club. A spade indicates a heart and vice versa. The magician adds *three* points to the card he sees, and knows what card the spectator took.

For example: If the spectator takes the short six of clubs, the magician will see the long three of diamonds. Diamonds means clubs, and three added to three is six.

The eight of clubs indicates the jack of diamonds; the nine of hearts the queen of spades. If the magician sees a *king*, he knows that the person took an *ace* of the companion suit. Thus the king of spades indicates the ace of hearts.

With this pack, the magician can name cards as fast as they are chosen. He can cut the pack (by the ends) into different heaps and gather them up in any order, but he must cut by *bending the lower half of the pack downwards*, otherwise he will separate a pair. The pack does not have to maintain any particular arrangement, for each pair is dependent on itself alone.

The magician can prepare beforehand by counting off the cards one at a time, each card on top of the card before, thus reversing the

rotation of the pack. The pack can then be shuffled by cutting into two heaps (normally) and riffling the ends together. Then he counts the cards one by one to show that they are all there. This again reverses the rotation, and the pack is ready for action.

5. The Short and Narrow Pack

This is an ordinary pack of cards, with one card trimmed short, and the other made narrow. Various tricks are possible with such a pack, and it will stand minute inspection.

If a card is chosen from a shuffled pack, the magician can use either the short or narrow card as a locator. He does this by riffling the side of the end of the pack. When he reaches one of the special cards, his finger will notice the gap. He has the selected card replaced at that spot, and the pack may be shuffled moderately, and cut several times. The magician can find the chosen card by riffling the pack and finding the special card upon which it rests.

It is not difficult to "force" the short card. The magician riffles the end of the pack very rapidly, asking a spectator to put in his finger. The cards fall so fast that the spectator scarcely has an opportunity. But when the short card falls, there will be a pause, and the chooser will invariably take advantage of it to put in his finger. Of course he draws out the short card, which is just below his finger, and the magician knows the name of the card.

A very effective trick may be performed with this pack. Place the narrow card on the bottom and the short card on the top. Give the pack to a person, and tell him to count off as many cards as he chooses, one at a time, on the table. This action reverses the order of the cards he counts off. If he counts twelve cards, the short card will then be the twelfth from the top of the heap. The heap is replaced on the pack.

Now the spectator may cut the pack as often as he likes (making single cuts). When the operator picks up the pack, he riffles the side,

and finds the narrow card with his thumb. He cuts the pack at that point so that the narrow card is on the bottom. Then he riffles the end, finds the short card, and lifts it off the pack with the cards above it. He counts those cards. There will be the same number (say twelve) as the spectator counted! In fact, the operator will have the very same cards.

6. The Instanto Pack

This pack, of recent invention, enables the magician to cut to any card called for, without hesitation. The magician is constantly cutting the pack. As soon as some one calls "Five of hearts," he makes another cut, and shows the bottom of the pack. There is the five of hearts!

The trick is repeated with any desired card, with great rapidity.

The suits are arranged in rotation. The top suit of the pack is clubs, and it runs from ace down to kings; then comes hearts, spades and diamonds, each in order from one to thirteen.

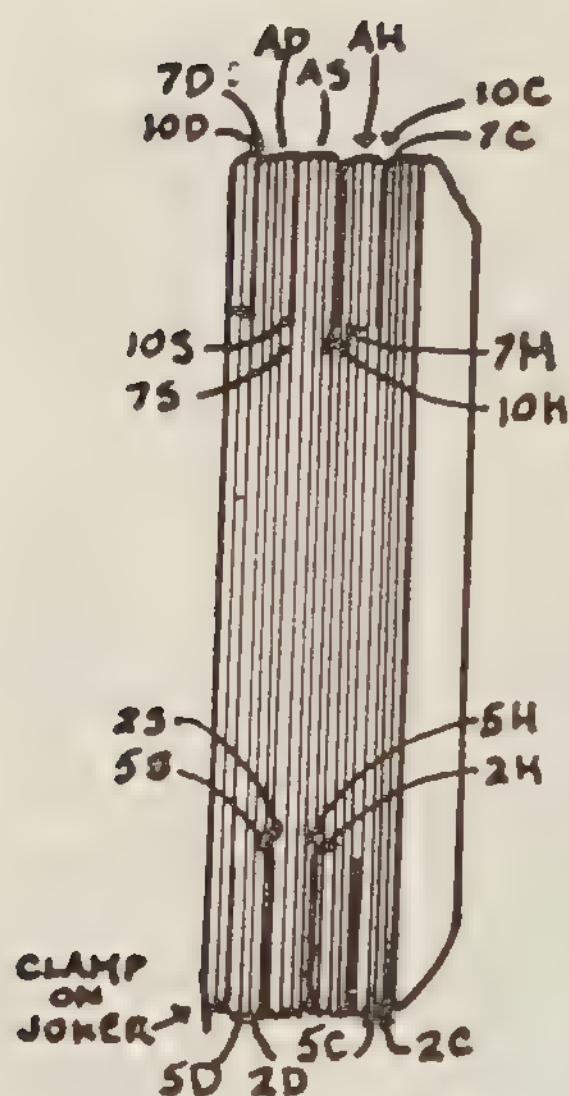
The bottom card is the joker, and it has a small tab attached to the inner right hand corner. The pack is always held with the tab at that position.

The cards are prepared thus: each ace and each deuce is unprepared. The threes, fours, and fives are cut slightly at the inner left corner, so that they taper in a bit.

The six spots and seven spots are unprepared, but the eight, nine, and ten of each suit taper at the outer left corner.

The jacks and queens are unprepared, but the kings are all short cards.

When the magician holds this pack vertically, he sees a miniature thumb index on the left side, which should be held upward. There are four grooves at the outer end, and four at the inner. He holds the pack in the bend of his left fingers. With his right forefinger he can easily open the pack at the seven of any suit; with his left thumb, he can



The prepared pack used in producing any card called for. The black lines indicate the grooves, and the figures and letters show the key cards.

open the pack at a ten spot.

At the inner corner, he can open the pack at a deuce with his right thumb, and at a five with his left thumb.

By riffling the ends of the pack, he can stop at any king. He must, of course, know exactly how the suits are located.

Simply cutting the pack does not disturb its order. As soon as a person starts to call for a card, the magician finds the tab on the joker, and cuts the pack so that the joker comes to the bottom.

If an ace is called for, the magician opens the pack at the deuce of that suit, leaves the deuce on top of the lower heap, and cuts the pack, bringing the ace to the bottom.

If the deuce is called for, he simply cuts the pack at the right point. For a trey, he cuts at the deuce, and slides the top card of the lower section on to the bottom of the upper. Then he cuts.

For a four spot, he cuts at the five, letting one card fall from the upper heap to the lower. For the five, he cuts at the five. For the six, he cuts at the seven, sliding one card on to the lower portion. For the seven, he cuts at the seven; for the eight, he cuts at the seven, and slides one card on to the upper portion from the lower.

For the nine, he cuts at the ten, and slides one card from the top portion on to the lower. For the ten he cuts at the ten. For the jack, he cuts at the ten, and slides one card from the top of the lower section to the bottom of the upper.

For the queen, he riffles to the king of the required suit, and slides one card from the bottom of the upper heap to the top of the lower

heap. For the king he simply riffles to the king.

This trick requires considerable practice, for speed is essential. The rapidity of the operation bewilders the spectators, and overbalances the weakness of the pack, namely that it cannot be shuffled or given for examination.

CHAPTER II

Coin Tricks

THIS CHAPTER EXPLAINS four ingenious bits of apparatus used in tricks with coins. There are many special coin tricks, but some of them have become hackneyed, or out of date.

Other coin tricks with apparatus are explained in the Carl Brema section of this book, as Mr. Brema has specialized in the manufacture of appliances of this nature.

1. The Coin Box

A half-dollar is placed in a cylindrical metal box. It is stood upright in the box, and a cover is placed on. The coin is heard to fall in the box. When the cover is removed, the coin has disappeared!

The box, which is nickel-plated, is painted black on the inside. The tail side of the coin is covered with a disc of black paper. Only the head of the coin is shown, and when the coin is set upright, the head is towards the spectators. The cover is set on the box so that it causes the coin to turn over. When the box is opened, the coin appears to be gone, for the black disc matches the interior of the box.

In the act of putting the cover on the box again, the magician lets the coin drop in the bend of his fingers. He may then lay the box where some one will examine it, as there is no trick to the box, once the coin has been removed.

2. The Vanishing Coin Bank

This appears to be a solid metal cylinder, closed at top and bottom,

with a semicircular opening just below the top. A half-dollar is pushed into the cylindrical bank, which is shaken, so that people can hear the coin inside. Then the bank is laid on the table. When a spectator picks it up, he finds it empty! No coin shakes inside, and there is no possible way by which the coin could have escaped.



The drawings illustrate the bank when closed, and also show the inner wall lowered to permit the escape of the coin.

This piece of apparatus is used for obtaining possession of a marked coin. It is not so solid as it seems to be. It is really two metal cylinders, each having a slide just below the top, and neither having a bottom. One cylinder is slightly smaller than the other. It is set upside down, and the two cylinders are pushed together, so that the top of the smaller one becomes the bottom of the larger.

The only way to slide the cylinders apart is to put a coin in the bank, and shake the bank. The weight of the coin (a half-dollar) causes the cylinders to slide apart slightly. The coin slides out through the lower semicircle, into the magician's hand. As he places the bank on the table, he presses the cylinders together again, and the bank is empty. It will stand close inspection.

3. The Coin Glass

A half-dollar is placed in a small tapering glass. A dollar bill is thrust down into the glass, to prevent the coin from escaping. When the bill is removed, the coin has gone!

A slit, semicircular, is cut from the side of the glass, at the bottom. With the proper kind of a glass, the slit is never noticed. The magician simply lets the coin slide out of the glass into his hand.

A combination trick may be worked with this glass, and an ordinary glass. A coin is balanced on the edge of the ordinary glass, and some playing cards are set on it, then the faked glass is set on the cards, its

weight holding the hidden coin in place.

A half-dollar is dropped in the upper (faked) glass, and a bill or piece of paper may be pressed in above it.

The magician lifts the upper glass, the hidden coin is released and it drops into the lower glass, just as though it passed through the playing cards. The magician immediately lets the coin slide out of the faked glass into his hand, and he can show the upper glass empty.

4. The Single Coin Vanisher

This is an oval piece of metal, with a cord-elastic attached. The elastic runs up the sleeve, to a safety-pin, so that the piece of metal hangs inside the coat sleeve. The magician stretches the elastic, and holds the metal piece in his hand. He lays a coin in his other hand. On one side of the metal piece is a dab of wax, or lead plaster. The magician brings his hands together, presses the waxed side of the metal piece upon the coin, and then raises his hands slightly apart. The metal piece flies up the sleeve carrying the coin along. The hands are then rubbed with a twisting motion, and are shown empty.

CHAPTER III

Handkerchief Tricks

THIS CHAPTER WILL BRIEFLY EXPLAIN some of the best appliances that are used in connection with handkerchief tricks. Handkerchief tricks are usually accomplished with the aid of apparatus, and the compressibility of fine silk handkerchiefs is of great aid.

1. The Handkerchief Pull

This is simply a pear-shaped metal container attached to a long piece of cord-elastic. The elastic runs through the belt-straps of the trousers, around the magician's back, and is tied to the strap furthest at the right. The "pull" rests against the magician's left hip.

Before performing, the magician draws up the "pull" and deposits it in his left vest pocket. He takes one, two, or three silk handkerchiefs, and tucks them in his vest pocket. He pulls up his sleeve, shows hands empty, and turns his left side towards the spectators. He draws out the handkerchiefs with his left hand, tucking his forefinger in the opening in the end of the "pull," bringing it along with the handkerchiefs.

Then, holding his hands together and moving them up and down, he works the handkerchiefs into the "pull." As soon as they are in, he lets the "pull" fly under his coat. A moment later he shows his hands empty.

2. The Color Changing Pull

This is another form of the "pull." The pear-shaped appliance has a

hole in each side, and the end is closed. A red silk handkerchief is in the "pull" which is in the vest pocket. The magician shows a green silk handkerchief, and tucks it in his vest pocket. He removes it later, with the "pull," and holds his left hand in a loose fist, with the back of the hand towards the onlookers.

The right forefinger pokes the green silk up into the fist, and the red silk emerges at the top, by the thumb. It is allowed to drape over the left hand. The handkerchief thus appears to change color as it goes through the hand. When the green silk is safely in the "pull" and the red silk is nearly out, the magician lets the "pull" fly under his coat. Then he shows the red silk handkerchief and his left hand empty.



Note the holes in the sides. The regulation "pull" for vanishing a handkerchief has a single hole in the end.

The passage of the "pull" is hidden by the left forearm.

3. The Handkerchief and Wand

The magician raps his solid wand upon the table. He wraps it in a piece of newspaper. A handkerchief disappears from his hands. He tears open the paper, and there is the handkerchief! The paper is torn to bits, but the wand is gone. The magician draws the wand from his pocket, from under his coat.

The wand is hollow. It is merely a piece of heavy glazed paper, rolled around a tube of newspaper. The handkerchief is pushed into the hollow wand, and two real wooden tips are inserted in the ends of the wand.

The magician vanishes the handkerchief by means of the "pull," or by another method. He has first shown the wand to be apparently solid by knocking a tip against the table. All he has to do is tear open

the paper in which he has rolled the wand and produce the handkerchief.

The paper must be opened carefully. The broken wand should be drawn away from the handkerchief, by pulling the paper tube apart. The handkerchief should not be pulled from the paper, or pieces of the wand may come with it. The paper may be torn to tiny pieces, as the only solid parts of the wand are the tips. The wand taken from the pocket is a solid one.

4. The Finger-Tip

This is a useful piece of apparatus, which will be discussed also in another chapter. It is a metal finger-tip that fits on the magician's forefinger. It contains the corner of a red silk handkerchief.

The magician wears the finger-tip, which is flesh colored. He rolls a red handkerchief between his hands, and apparently takes it in the left hand, but really retains it in the right. The finger-tip, which is on his right forefinger, is left in the closed left hand, and the right finger and thumb pull out the tiny corner, so that it shows in the opening of the left fist.

The magician invites a person to hold his left wrist. As the person stands in front of him, he can easily pocket the handkerchief which is in his right hand. Then he pokes the tiny corner into his left fist with his right forefinger. When he takes out his finger, he has the tip on it. He shows the right hand empty, keeping it in motion. Then he shows that the left hand is also empty. The handkerchief has disappeared!

5. Handkerchief Production (With Improvement)

The magician shows his hands empty, and placing them together, produces a handkerchief.

The handkerchief comes from a false finger, which is situated

between the second and third fingers of his right hand. The palms or backs of the hands are not shown directly. In showing his hands empty, the magician keeps the ends of the fingers towards the audience, and keeps his hands in motion. The hands are obviously empty, but no one can count the fingers. When the hands are brought together, the finger is slipped between them, and as it is open at the bottom, the silk handkerchief which it contains is easily produced between the hands.

Now for the improvement. With the old style finger, the magician had to slip the appliance into his pocket immediately. The author, however, uses a cigar-shaped metal container, made from an aluminum tube that holds a lighted cigar. The appliance is painted flesh-color.

This apparatus will hold *two* silk handkerchiefs. It is larger than an ordinary finger, but that fact is never noticed, because the hands must be kept in motion. The most perfect finger would be detected if the hands were held still, because then the extra finger would be noticed.

After the two handkerchiefs are produced from the big finger, it is slipped over one of the magician's own fingers and can be removed later on.

CHAPTER IV

Miscellaneous Tricks

1. The Cigarette Vanisher

THIS IS SIMPLY A MINIATURE “PULL.” (See the “Handkerchief Pull.”) It is made of a size to receive a cigarette. The magician holds the appliance in his left hand and pushes the lighted end of a cigarette into his hand. The cigarette goes into the metal container, and the latter flies under the coat.

Some magicians run the “Cigarette Pull” up the sleeve.

An even smaller “pull” is used to vanish a match. In this case, the sleeve is the best container. The metal part of the “Match Pull” is very small. It is painted flesh-color, and is held in the hand by means of a tiny metal clip that fits between the fingers. The original “Match Pull” has been highly improved by Carl Brema, as it is used in his “Cigarette Tube” trick.

2. Cigar and Cigarette Vanishes

A lighted cigarette butt may be vanished by means of the “Finger-Tip,” previously described. The tip is held in the closed left hand. The right hand pushes the tiny bit of cigarette into the left hand, and the forefinger pokes it further in. The forefinger comes out wearing the tip, and the hands are shown empty (being kept in motion).

The “Thumb Tip” is similar to the “Finger-Tip,” but much larger. With it the magician can vanish the end of a cigar. He drapes a handkerchief over his closed left fist. Then, with his right thumb, which is wearing the tip, he makes a pocket in the handkerchief, extending down into his left fist. The left fist retains the “thumb tip”

in the pocket of the handkerchief.

Into the pocket thus formed, the magician drops his short cigar, lighted end first. He pushes in his thumb, and comes out wearing the thumb tip. He waves his hand showing it empty. Then he shakes out the handkerchief, showing that the cigar has disappeared. The handkerchief is uninjured.

If he is using his own handkerchief (a muslin one should be used), the magician can put it in his pocket and drop the "Thumb Tip" with it. If the handkerchief is borrowed, he should drop the tip in his vest pocket under cover of the handkerchief.

3. The Vanishing Pencil

The magician takes a pencil between his hands and starts to break it over his knee. When he lifts his hands the pencil has disappeared.

This is done with a "Cigarette Vanisher" which has a rubber eraser cap in it. The end of the pencil is pushed into the cap. When the hands cover the pencil as though to break it upon the knee, they release it, and it flies under the coat.

4. Torn and Restored Paper

This is the trick in which the "Thumb Tip" was originally used. The magician has two long strips of tissue paper. One is pleated, and placed in the "Thumb Tip," which is worn on the right thumb. The magician exhibits the other piece, and drapes it over his right thumb so that it hides the spot where the edge of the tip lies.

Then he tears up the paper strip. His bent left fingers pull off the "Thumb Tip," and the thumbs and fingers, in folding up the torn pieces, pull out the duplicate paper, and tuck the torn pieces in the tip, which is still held in the finger bend, while the magician casually holds his thumbs up for view. Then the "Thumb Tip" is slipped back on the right thumb, and the duplicate paper is unfolded, and shown

restored. The hands are shown empty, being kept slightly in motion. The restored paper is draped over the right thumb, and is then rolled up and placed in the pocket, the tip going with it.

This trick must be practiced very carefully. It can be done quite easily, but the magician should seek to cultivate artistic moves, and a calm, deliberate way of working, as the trick may be made highly effective.

5. The X-Ray Clock

This is purely a mechanical trick, which is worthy of description, as it is a very perplexing mystery, suitable for close work.

It consists of an oblong piece of wood, or frame. In the upper half is a clock dial with a movable pointer. The dial is set by a spectator, while the magician's back is turned. Then the spectator slides a movable lid over the dial so that it is hidden from view. But when the magician looks at the clock, he immediately tells at what hour the hand is set.

In the lower half of the frame there is a brass screw, which is only visible when the moving slide covers the dial. The screw is apparently necessary in the construction of the clock. But it is really an indicator. The screw turns with the hand on the dial, by means of an ingenious internal mechanism. The magician notes how the groove on the screw is pointing, and it tells him where the hand points on the dial.

6. The Divination Candles

Some tricks are so clever in principle that the apparatus alone excites admiration because of its ingenious construction.

Such a trick is the "Divination Candles," an effect which has been gradually improved, and which will be described in its latest form.

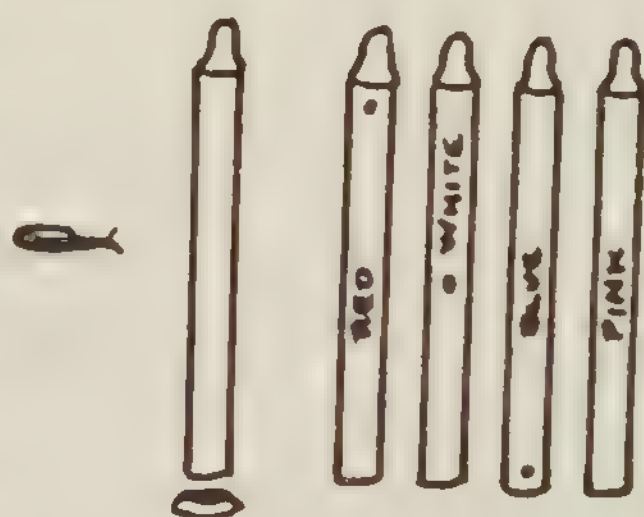
The audience is provided with four wooden candles, colored red, white, blue, and pink. A brass tube goes with the candles. It is just

large enough to contain one candle.

A member of the audience puts a candle in the tube, and closes the bottom of the tube. The magician takes the tube, passes his hand over it, and immediately names the color of the candle inside, although the remaining candles are hidden from his view.

Three of the candles have bits of magnetized iron inside. The red is magnetized at the top; the white at the center; the blue at the bottom.

The magician has a tiny compass concealed in his hand, held between his fingers by a flesh-colored clip. He passes his hand over the tube. If the compass is disturbed as it passes the top of the tube, the magician knows that the red candle is inside. The red is magnetized at the top; the white in the center, the blue at the bottom. No activity of the compass indicates pink.



Illustrating the brass tube, the candles and the compass. The stars indicate the magnetized bits of metal.

Miniature candles were used originally; now the trick is manufactured with full size candles. The tube may be wrapped in paper, or a candle may be wrapped in paper alone.

An improvement in the trick lies in the use of a special wand. One of the tips of the wand slides outward, and a compass, mounted on a spring, bobs out. By passing the wand over the tube, the magician tells the color of the candle inside.

The author has made two improvements to this trick. One is the use of *four* tubes, identical in appearance. Members of the audience put one candle in each tube, and mix them. The magician passes his hand over each tube in turn, naming the colors, and returning the tubes to the people holding them. All tubes are opened at the finish, and every statement of the magician proves to be correct.

The other improvement lies in the use of a “shell” candle, made of

metal and painted red. The shell, when pushed into the tube, fits so snugly that no one can detect its presence.

After performing the trick in the usual way, the magician puts the candles in his pocket. As an afterthought he brings out the red tube—(really the shell)—which contains a solid *black* candle. He puts the red ‘candle’ in the tube, and closes the tube. Then he asks what color candle is in the tube. Every one says “Red.”

The magician lets a spectator open the tube, and out drops the black candle!

The bottoms of all the candles should be painted black when the trick is performed with this finish.

7. The Patriotic Rockets

This trick is an inferior version of the “Divination Candles.” Three small wooden rockets are used—red, white, and blue. The tube opens in the center. The red rocket is weighted at the pointed end, the white in the middle, the blue at the bottom. By holding the tube at the center, the magician can note whether or not it tilts in one direction, and can thereby name the color of the enclosed rocket.

SECTION IV

Carl Brema's Exclusive Mysteries

Carl Brema's Exclusive Mysteries

FIFTY YEARS AGO, a small boy stood outside the grounds of the Centennial Exhibition, in Philadelphia. He had no thoughts save of the present; yet at that very moment, Fate was moulding for him a career that was to prove as unique as it was unforeseen.

A tall, mysterious gentleman, wearing a turned-up moustache and a pointed goatee, approached the boy, surveyed him from head to foot, and bade him accompany him. The boy obeyed the strange personage as promptly as if the man were Mephistopheles himself; and thereupon his future was decided. For half a century he has been held by the enchanting spell cast by the mysterious stranger.

The gentleman with the Satanic countenance was Robert Nickle, one of the most proficient magicians of that time; the boy was Carl Brema, who is, today, the greatest originator and constructor of magical appliances in America.

The magician, Robert Nickle, was giving performances at the Centennial grounds. He wanted a boy to be in the audience, ready to come on the stage when he was needed. Young Brema was the first boy the magician saw, so he was given the job. During the days that followed, Carl Brema served the magician faithfully, and at the same time, formed a secret ambition. He resolved that he, too, would take up magic as his profession.

For many years, Brema made a comfortable living as a magician, appearing chiefly in the vicinity of Philadelphia. He was of a mechanical turn of mind, and constructed his own apparatus, in-

venting new tricks as occasion demanded. He built working devices for other magicians, and finally took up the manufacture of magical apparatus as a regular business. With his son, who is a skilled mechanic, Brema established a small magical factory, which has never been idle. Magical retailers, as well as magicians, have recognized the sterling mark of quality on Brema's apparatus, and the demand has been unfailing.

The author has frequently assisted Brema in forming written descriptions of these special appliances, and has thus gained a thorough working knowledge of Brema's exclusive mysteries. Properly explained, the majority of Brema's effects may be performed with a minimum of skill. Therefore, this section is included in the present volume. It represents the first authorized publication of Carl Brema's exclusive mysteries, and is the first printed explanation of certain secrets which are recognized as the greatest developments of modern magic—mechanical appliances which truly belong to the future art of conjuring.

1. The Yogi Coin Box

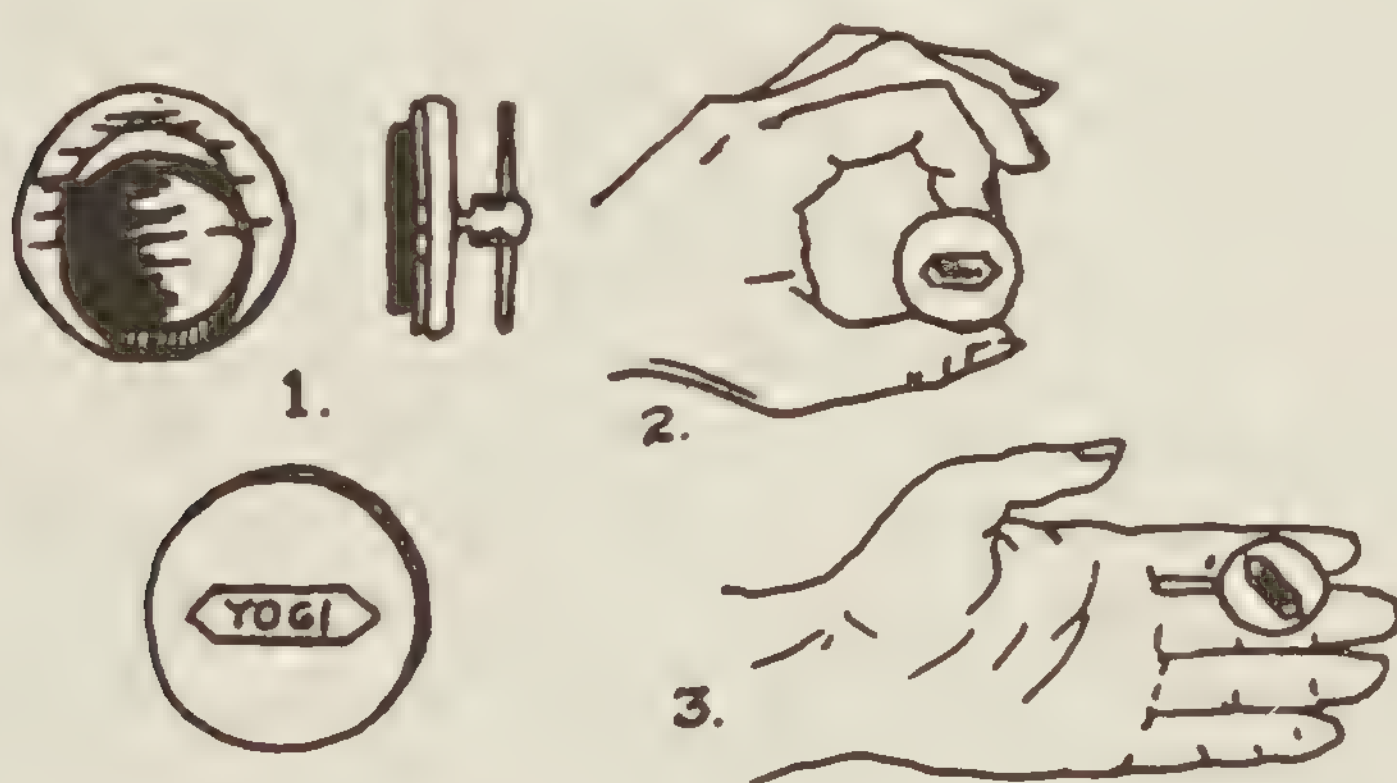
The apparatus for this trick consists of a small, circular metal box, just large enough to hold a penny. A screw cap, or plunger, fits into the box. On the bottom of the box appears the word "Yogi."

The magician passes out three or four pennies of different dates, and asks that one of them be placed in the box, and the cover screwed on. This is done, and the box is handed to the magician. He holds it to his forehead, and immediately names the date of the penny that is inside.

Inasmuch as the box is made of metal, and may be thoroughly examined, there seems to be no plausible explanation for the trick. As a matter of fact, the secret is so artful that detection is well-nigh impossible.

Pennies vary in thickness, and the magician has simply to obtain

several pennies of different dates that have this imperceptible variation. This is discovered by putting each penny into the box, and screwing on the cap. When the box is held so that the word "Yogi" is horizontal, the rod on top of the screw-cap will point like the hand of a clock. It will point at different places according to the thickness of the particular penny that is in the box.



1—View of the Yogi Coin Box, showing the bottom and the metal plunger. 2—How the little metal rod indicates the date of the coin in the box. 3—Alternate method of picking up the box.

The magician memorizes the different dates and their indicated positions. Then, when he takes the box, he either holds it as shown in Fig. 2, and thus learns the date, or he may grip the rod between his first and second fingers, and note the direction in which the fingers point. (See Fig. 3.) He should also make note of the position of the pointer when the box is empty, as some one may try to mislead him by merely closing the box without a coin inside.

In the latest form of the "Yogi Coin Box," colored discs (of varying thickness) are used instead of pennies. The colors of the discs are more noticeable than the dates on the pennies. It is impossible to detect the difference in thickness.

2. The Demon's Bars

Four small nickel-plated bars are used in this trick.

Each bar is about an inch and a half long, by about a quarter of an inch in diameter.

One bar has a sliding weight inside it, so that when it is shaken, people will hear the noise of the weight.

At the beginning, three bars are laid on the table: two solid, and one with the slide. The bars are pushed around, and the sliding bar is shaken. A person is invited to pick up the sliding bar, but he picks up the wrong one! He lifts a solid bar, and the magician smilingly picks up another bar, shakes it, and proves that it is the sliding one.

The trick is repeated time and again, but always with the same result. No one can point out the position of the sliding bar.

The ends of the bars are grooved so that they may be easily palmed crosswise in the palm. The magician has the extra solid bar palmed before he begins the trick. After the bars are examined, he gathers them up, and in dropping them on the table substitutes the extra solid bar for the sliding bar.

In moving the three solid bars around the table, he picks up one and shakes it. The audience hears the palmed bar shake, but they think the solid bar is the "shaker." So of course they point to that bar as the sliding one. But when they examine the bar, they find it to be solid, while the magician picks up *another* solid bar and gives it a shake. Then, as he mixes the bars, all attention follows the new "shaker," which also turns out to be a solid bar.

The magician can make any solid bar appear to be the "shaker" by simply shaking it with his right hand (which holds the sliding bar). If he shakes a solid bar with his left hand, no sound will be heard.

At the finish, the magician, in gathering up the bars, lets the genuine shaking bar fall, and palms off the extra solid bar.

In the older form of this trick, two solids and a shaking bar were

used. The magician had an extra shaker in his palm. This enabled him to make a solid bar appear to be a shaker. In this method, no exchanging was necessary. But it was possible for the spectators to point out the shaking bar if they simply made a wild guess, and picked up the bar at random.

In the new method, no one can possibly pick up the "shaker," because all three bars on the table are solid!

3. The Disc and String Trick

The apparatus consists of six unprepared discs and a fake disc that breaks apart in the center, but which when closed will stand the closest observation.

Have the fake disc concealed in the left hand. Pass the six unprepared discs for close examination. Ask that they be laid in your right hand. Then let them slide into your left, but secretly retain one of them in the bend of your fingers. Thus the fake disc in the left hand appears to be one of the six original discs.



1—How the discs are threaded on the string. 2—Discs removed from beneath the handkerchief. 3—The fake disc. Note the prongs in one section.

Thread the fake disc on the string. Give a person the ends, with the

fake hanging in the center, and let him drop the five discs over the ends of string so they are supported by the fake. Then he holds the ends of string straight out and a handkerchief is thrown over the discs.

Reach under, break off the fake disc and hold the pieces in the left hand. Take five of the discs in the right hand (counting the one concealed there), but leave the other real disc under the string. Throw the five on the table. Some one asks for the sixth. Reach through the handkerchief with right hand and grip the remaining disc, holding it pressed against the string. Remove the left hand with the fake pieces. Then when the handkerchief is finally lifted, they see the genuine disc off the thread, and the discs and thread may be thoroughly examined. Pocket the handkerchief, the pieces of the fake going along with it.

4. Brema's Dollar Bill and Tube Trick

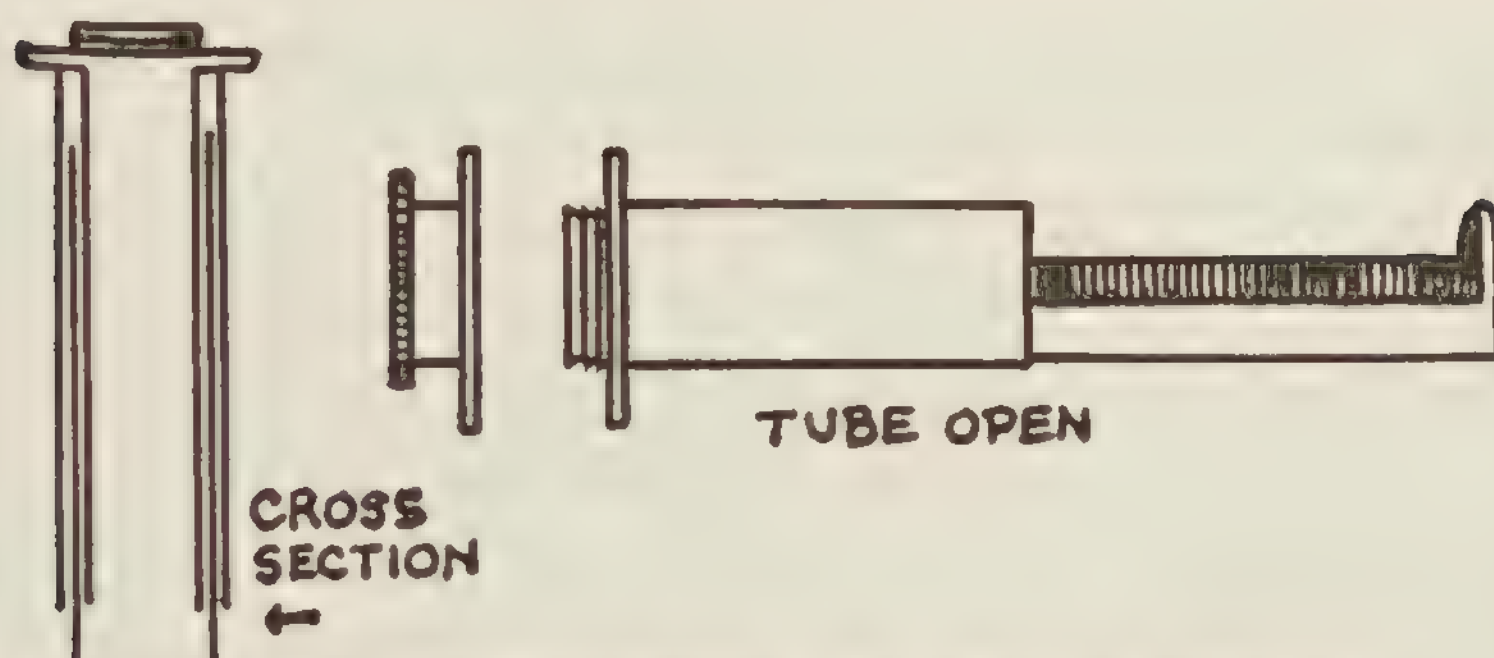
The magician borrows a bill of any denomination. Its number is taken, and it is folded into a small cylinder, and the bill is laid in a conspicuous place.

The magician reaches in his trouser pocket and brings out a brass tube, which has a screw cap. There is a flange on the tube and one on the cap, and these are connected by a piece of wire that runs through two small holes in the flanges. So the tube is securely sealed. The tube is given to a spectator.

The dollar bill vanishes, and the person holding the tube is furnished with pliers, and told to cut the twisted wire. He unscrews the cap of the tube, and the dollar bill is found inside!

The trick is in the tube—not in the cap. The tube has an inner wall, and no bottom. Between the two walls another tube, with a bottom, may be inserted. The side of this tube is cut out.

The inner tube is pushed slightly into the outer, and the cover is put on and screwed tight, being fastened with wire. The tube, in this condition, is in the trouser pocket.



View of the "Bill Tube," and cross-section illustrating the operation.

The magician borrows a bill, and folds it in a small cylinder. He has another bill, folded similarly, and he exchanges one bill for the other. Both bills are encircled with rubber bands. When he reaches into his pocket, he has the original bill palmed, in the bend of his right fingers. He drops it in the opening in the side of the tube, and closes the tube by pushing the top and bottom together. Then he gives the tube to a spectator to hold. He vanishes the duplicate bill, and the original is found in the tube.

This tube is perfectly made. It is impossible for any one to detect its construction. The inner tube cannot be pushed out, because a person cannot put his finger inside of it, as the diameter is too small. When the magician wants to prepare the tube, he uses a pencil to push out the inner tube.

5. The New Egg Production

Catching eggs out of the air becomes an easy pastime with the aid of a specially made imitation egg.

The egg is simply a half of a wooden egg, which is cut lengthwise. Attached to the center of the egg is a flesh-colored wire forming a half ring. The flat surface of the imitation egg is grooved slightly, and is painted a flesh-color.

The magician takes the imitation egg, and slips it on his second

finger, until the ring reaches the second joint. The bulk of the egg is at the back of the hand.

The palm of the hand may now be shown, and the hand appears to be empty. As the hand is thrust up in the air, the fingers are quickly bent in, and the egg appears, the thumb pressing against it to make it look as though the egg is held by the thumb and fingers.

The hand is lowered into a hat, and the fingers are immediately straightened. The hand is brought out, and another egg is caught from the air. This is continued, each egg being apparently laid in the hat, until about a dozen eggs have been produced. Then the fake egg is actually left in the hat.

The hat has been filled with eggs beforehand, so when the interior is shown, there are the eggs!

6. The Improved Cigarette Catcher

The old form of the "Cigarette Catcher" was a flesh-colored half-ring that could be fitted to the top knuckle of the second finger of the right hand. A prong at the bottom of the ring was thrust into a cigarette, which extended back along the finger to the joint.

The magician could show his hand empty with fingers apart, and catch a cigarette by bending in his fingers. The final position of the hand was, however, cramped and unnatural.

In Brema's improved catcher, the tiny projecting prong is on a pivot. Normally, the cigarette lies along the finger, but as soon as the hand is swung upward and forward, the cigarette flies to the end of the second finger. As the pivot is eccentric, the cigarette does not extend directly off the end of the finger, but comes up at an angle so that it can be grasped between the thumb and forefinger of the hand.

In using the catcher, a number of cigarettes are held in the left hand. The right hand picks up an empty hat. The left hand takes the hat and introduces the cigarettes. Then the hat is laid on the table. The

magician obtains the cigarette catcher, which is in his pocket or behind an object on the table, and apparently catches a dozen or more cigarettes; for each time he pretends to place a cigarette in the hat, he lets the cigarette fall behind the hand, to be caught again. The left hand holds the hat, with the mouth tilted backwards, so as to mask the fact that each cigarette is not dropped in.

To conclude the trick, the right thumb and forefinger pull the cigarette from the catcher and throw it into the hat. The left hand then shows that the hat is filled with cigarettes, which may be distributed among the audience. The "catcher" may be disposed of very easily.

7. The Cigarette Wand

This is another form of apparatus for the production of cigarettes. Years ago magicians first used an appliance called the "Coin Wand," with which coins were made to appear on the end of the wand.

Brema's "Cigarette Wand" is a more modern invention. Pretending to see cigarettes out of his reach, the magician waves his wand in the air, and catches cigarettes, one at a time, on the end of the slender rod. The cigarettes lie crosswise on the end of the wand, and the magician apparently removes each cigarette and drops it in the hat.

One cigarette is used, and it is a rubber imitation. It fits inside the wand, and is attached to the end of a small rod, or plunger. A wave of the wand causes the plunger to slide forward, and eject the cigarette from the open tip of the wand. There is a spring hinge at the end of the plunger, so the cigarette, instead of sticking straight out, lays crosswise over the tip of the wand, one end of it touching the tip. When the magician pretends to remove the cigarette, he bends it straight in his hand and lets it slide back into the wand, which is held vertically. He pretends to drop the cigarette in the hat, and proceeds to catch another cigarette.

8. The Cigarette Tube

The magician lights a cigarette and inserts it in a small metal tube, pushing the lighted end in first so that the cigarette is extinguished. He gives the tube to some one to hold, after placing a cover upon it.

Then he places the match between his hands, and it vanishes.

The tube is opened; the cigarette is gone, and the match is found inside!

The magician reaches in his pocket and brings out the lighted cigarette.

The cigarette is made of metal and is hollow. One end contains a piece of a cigarette. The match is inside the hollow cigarette, which may be lighted and smoked for a few moments just like the genuine article.

The fake cigarette fits exactly in the tube. Hence when the tube is opened, the match is discovered in place of the cigarette. This trick must be perfectly made. The cigarette can be removed from the tube only by means of a special rod which is inserted and engages the lower end of the tube.

The vanishing of the match is accomplished by means of a "Match Vanisher" described on page 000.

The lighted cigarette drawn from the pocket is in a small wire framework, surrounded by a tiny metal screen. The framework is fastened to the inside of the pocket by means of a safety-pin.

9. The Sliding Coin Box

The "Sliding Coin Box" is a miniature edition of the famous "Sliding Die Box," but its construction and method of operating are unique.

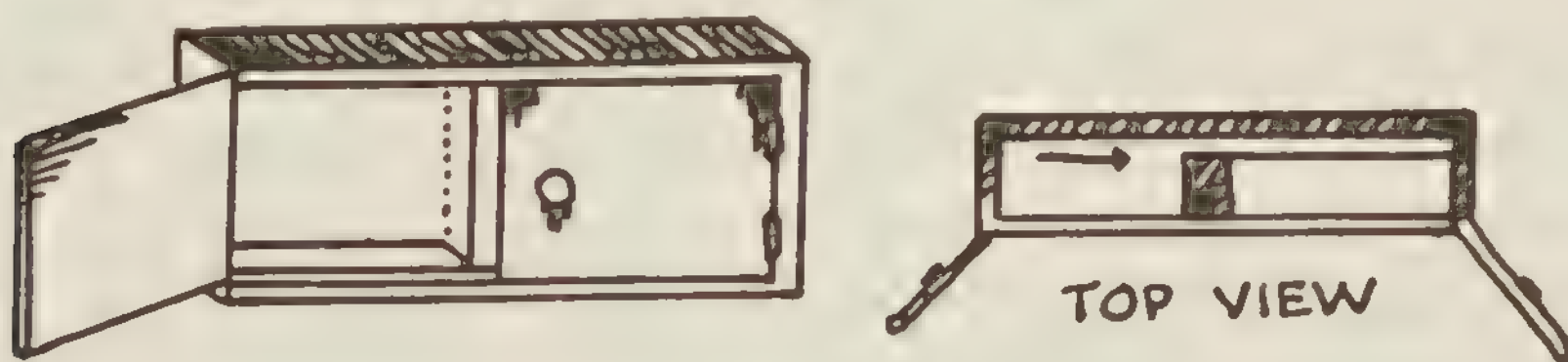
The apparatus consists of a small oblong box, divided into two compartments, each just large enough to accommodate a half-dollar, although the depth of each compartment is several times the thickness of a half-dollar. There is a small dividing partition between the two

compartments, and each section has a hinged door.

The magician opens one door and drops in a half-dollar. Then he closes the door, and tilts the box so that the coin slides into the second compartment. Every one can hear the coin slide. The magician opens the door of the first compartment, shows it empty, and closes the door. Then he tilts the box so that the coin slides back into the first compartment, whereupon he shows that the second compartment is empty.

This procedure is repeated ad lib., and of course no one is deceived by it. The spectators demand that both doors be opened, and finally the magician complies with the request. Both compartments are then shown empty!

The secret of the box is simple, but ingenious. The second compartment is shallower than the first, and a space is provided in back of the second compartment. The partition does not extend back beyond the second compartment, so the coin when it slides, goes in back of and not into the second compartment.



An illustration of the "Sliding Coin Box." The "Top View" shows the secret compartment that received the coin.

When both doors are finally opened, the coin is in back of the shallow compartment, hence the box appears to be empty.

The interior of the box is black, so the difference in depth of the compartments is not discernible. There is a tiny hole in back of the secret hiding place, and a spring clamp is provided on the back of the box. A point projects from the clamp into the hiding place, so when

the box is shown empty, the magician merely presses the clamp with his finger and may then shake the box without causing the coin to rattle.

The "Wooden Pocketbook" is a minor appliance invented to go with the "Sliding Coin Box." It consists of two square wooden slabs, riveted at one corner, so that the thin slabs swing apart. When the magician begins the trick, he opens the "pocketbook" and shows that the lower slab contains a coin, in a depression hollowed out to receive it. He tosses the coin from the "pocketbook" and closes the slabs. Then he makes the coin disappear from the "Coin Box." When the slabs are swung apart, there is the coin, back in the "pocketbook."

The upper slab has a depression and a coin like the lower. When the slabs are swung apart, only the lower coin is seen. The upper slab overlaps the lower slightly, so the upper coin does not fall out. When the "pocketbook" is closed, the upper coin drops down into the lower slab, and is in position for the conclusion of the trick.

10. The Silver Boxes

Properly performed, this experiment appears to be a demonstration of REAL MAGIC. It is one of the most excellent mysteries ever devised.

The magician borrows a half-dollar, and requests that a gummed label be affixed to it. Initials are placed upon the gummed label, and the coin is laid in full view.

The magician reaches in his pocket and brings out a green velvet bag, about the size of the fist. He asks a person to hold it. Then he vanishes the half-dollar (by means of the "Sliding Coin Box").¹

¹Before inventing the "Sliding Coin Box," Brema devised a mechanical pistol for vanishing the coin. The pistol had a device on the end which clipped the coin, so that it was held at the mouth of the barrel. When the trigger was pulled, a spring was released, and a slender arm instantly carried the coin into the magician's hand, the back of which was towards the audience. The mechanism of the pistol requires extremely careful workmanship, and only a few of the tiny guns are in existence.

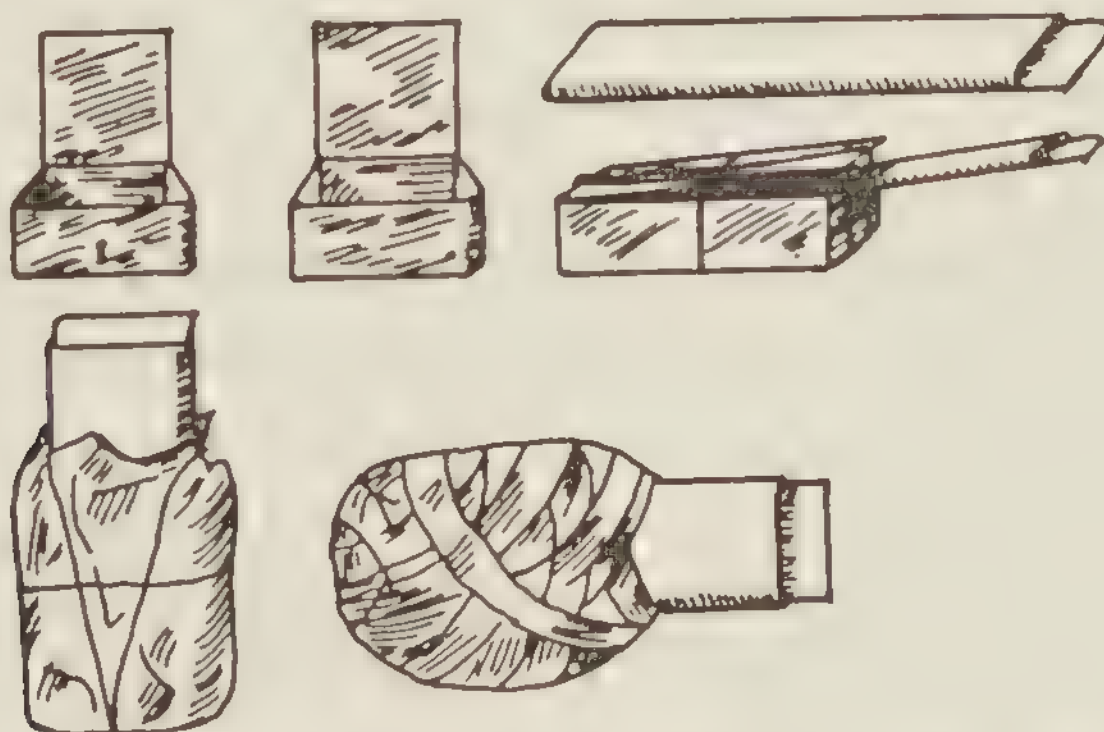
The bag is opened, by the person holding it, and a ball of tape is found inside. The tape is tightly wound, and there is no access to its interior.

The spectators unroll the tape, and inside they find a small packet wrapped in tissue paper and bound with rubber bands. The package is completely closed and may be minutely examined.

Two wrappings of different colored tissue paper are removed from the packet, and finally a small silver or nickel-plated box is revealed, bound with rubber bands. The box has a hinged cover, and when it is opened, a smaller box is found within. The smaller box cannot be opened, for it is locked. The magician asks that the box be shaken. Something rattles inside. Then, picking up the tape, the magician calls attention to a small key fixed to the end of the tape. He gives the key to the person holding the box. The box is unlocked, the lid springs open, and there is *the very half-dollar that was borrowed from the audience!*

Now for the secret of this capital mystery.

The magician has a long flat tin tube, just the size to allow the passage of a half-dollar. He inserts the end of the tube in the two boxes, and presses the lids as far shut as they will go. To prevent the lids from springing open, rubber bands are placed around the outer



The various parts of the "Coin in Silver Boxes," showing the boxes, tube, and tape used in wrapping.

box, some of the bands crossways, and others lengthways from the sides of the tube (which is narrower than the boxes), to the opposite end of the outer box, where the hinge is.

Then a square of tissue paper is wrapped around the box. The end at the hinge is folded under, but the other end, where the tube is, is compressed or telescoped about the tube, and rubber bands are snapped lengthways around the tissue-paper covering, just as they were placed around the box itself. The next covering of tissue paper is treated in the same manner.

Beginning with the key, the tape, which is several yards long, is wound around the box, overlapping the tube to a great extent, and the tape is secured with a heavy rubber band. The magician then has a ball of tape with a flat hollow tin tube projecting from it. He places the outfit in the green velvet bag, and puts it in his pocket with the tube extending out of the bag. The bag has a tightening string at the top. The bag should be put in the right coat pocket.

In his left hand the magician has a duplicate half-dollar with a gummed label pasted on it. He receives the marked coin in his right hand and pretends to transfer it to his left, but he retains the half-dollar in his right hand and lays the duplicate on the table.¹

Turning his left side towards the audience, the magician puts his hand in his right coat pocket, and drops the coin into the tin slide.²

The left hand reaches over and grips the bag through the cloth of the pocket, while the right hand pulls out the slide and lets it lie in the pocket. The right hand then brings out the green bag, pulling on the

¹The magician may exchange coins by any method that suits him. By utilizing a "Coin Fold," the original coin need not be exchanged, but the "Coin Fold" is not as effective as the "Sliding Coin Box." The same amount of skill is necessary in the "Coin Fold" as in an exchange.

²One end of the tin slide is broadened, and one side is cut away so that the coin may be dropped in easily.

draw-strings and squeezing the bag slightly so that the tape will close about the boxes.

The duplicate coin is then taken and caused to vanish, while the spectator holds the green velvet bag.

When the bag is opened, the tape will be completely closed and will appear to be a solid ball. When the tape is unwound, the tissue-paper covering of the boxes will have closed completely, thanks to the rubber bands, and it will appear to have no possible entrance. This action of the tissue paper and rubber bands is automatic, and so perfect that the wrapping may be thoroughly examined.

At this point, the magician should note the packet carefully. The inner box is the only one that has a spring hinge, and it also has a spring lock. If the rubber bands are strong, they will have snapped the lock shut. The magician may, however, show his hand empty, and carefully take the packet between his thumb and forefinger for all to see. This allows him to press the boxes and snap the lock shut.

When the boxes are unwrapped and the inner one is unlocked, the borrowed coin is discovered.

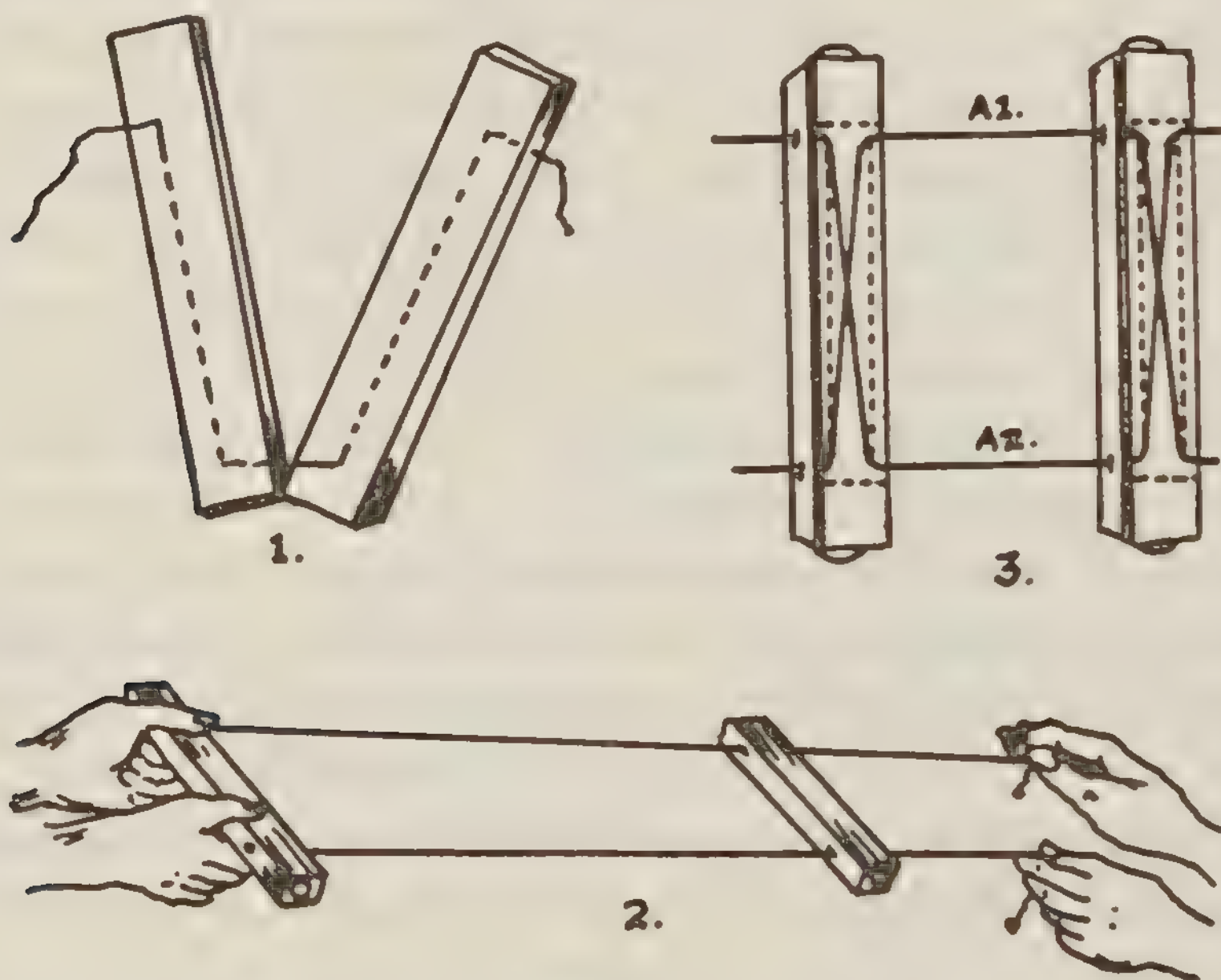
11. The Devil's Ladder

There is an old trick known as the "Pillars of Solomon," that has formed the foundation of several excellent mysteries. The trick, in its original form, is now hopelessly out of date.

The first apparatus consisted of two miniature pillars, with holes bored through them, near one end. These holes admitted a string, which apparently passed through the two pillars. The string was then cut, and the ends of the pillars separated. When they were again set together, the string became rejoined, and could be pulled back and forth through the pillars.

The explanation was exceedingly simple. The string, instead of passing directly through both pillars, ran down through one pillar,

then across to the other, and up through to the top. A glance at Fig. 1 will reveal the principle. When the string was apparently cut at the top, and the pillars separated, the magician took care to keep the lower ends together, in the manner illustrated.



This crude and childish apparatus is of no value in itself, but it involves the principle of the "Devil's Ladder," which is a real mystery. Two pillars are used in this trick, but they have cords passing through *both* ends, and they may be openly inspected. The magician invites a party to hold one of the posts, then he draws the ends of the cords taut, and shows how the other pillar slides freely along the strings, as shown in Fig. 2. The pillars are then brought together at the centers of the cords, and a member of the audience is invited to choose either string. That string is cut, and it immediately becomes rejoined.

The secret is revealed in Fig. 3. It is just like the ancient "Pillars of

Solomon," but, as two cords are used, they cross each other as they pass longitudinally through the posts. Obviously, if cord A1 is cut, the audience will believe that a string, passing directly through the posts, has been severed. In reality, cord A2 has been severed, and when the magician pulls the string that is at the upper ends of the posts, it apparently runs through just as it did before!

So perplexing is this double-barreled principle, that a person familiar with the method is apt to become confused when he is first practicing the trick.

The operation is as follows: After the magician has demonstrated that the cords pass through the posts, he asks that one string be selected. We will suppose that the cord passing through the upper end is chosen. The magician draws the posts together, and draws the lower cord through until he reaches the knot at one end. Then he wraps the cord tightly around the lower ends of the posts, binding them together.

The cord is then cut at the upper end of the posts—between them, and the magician separates the posts slightly, showing the severed ends. He presses the posts together again, makes a mystic pass, and immediately pulls on the string at the upper end. It runs back and forth, apparently restored. The posts may be separated again, at the upper end. But, of course, the cord will run every time. The conclusion of the trick is most convincing. To prove that the string is actually restored, the magician cuts the knot from one end of the upper string. Then he asks a spectator to take hold of the knot at the other end. The magician walks away, carrying the posts with him. When the knotless end of the string reaches the first post, it is drawn right through the posts, and the spectator finds himself in possession of a perfect piece of string—proof positive that the cord has been restored. To further heighten this impression, the magician may take the string from the spectator, and thrust it directly through the upper holes of

the posts, and tie the knot in the free end.

In dimensions, the posts measure eight inches in length, and one inch in thickness. They are made of wood, but are also manufactured in a pocket size, less than three inches in length. The smaller posts are made of metal.

12. The Hindu Wand

This mystery is another development of the "Pillars of Solomon," and it is vastly superior to the "Devil's Ladder," although it requires greater skill in operation. It is one of the finest of modern magical effects, as it is subject to many variations, and its operation may be extended over several minutes.

Like its predecessors, the trick involves two sticks, but in this case they are metal wands, fourteen inches long, and three-quarters of an inch in diameter. The string is cut, and the wands are *completely* separated, yet the string is apparently restored. Then to cap the climax, the wands are separated, and held apart, and when the magician pulls the cord on one wand, it becomes longer, while the cord on the other wand simultaneously shortens itself, without being touched!

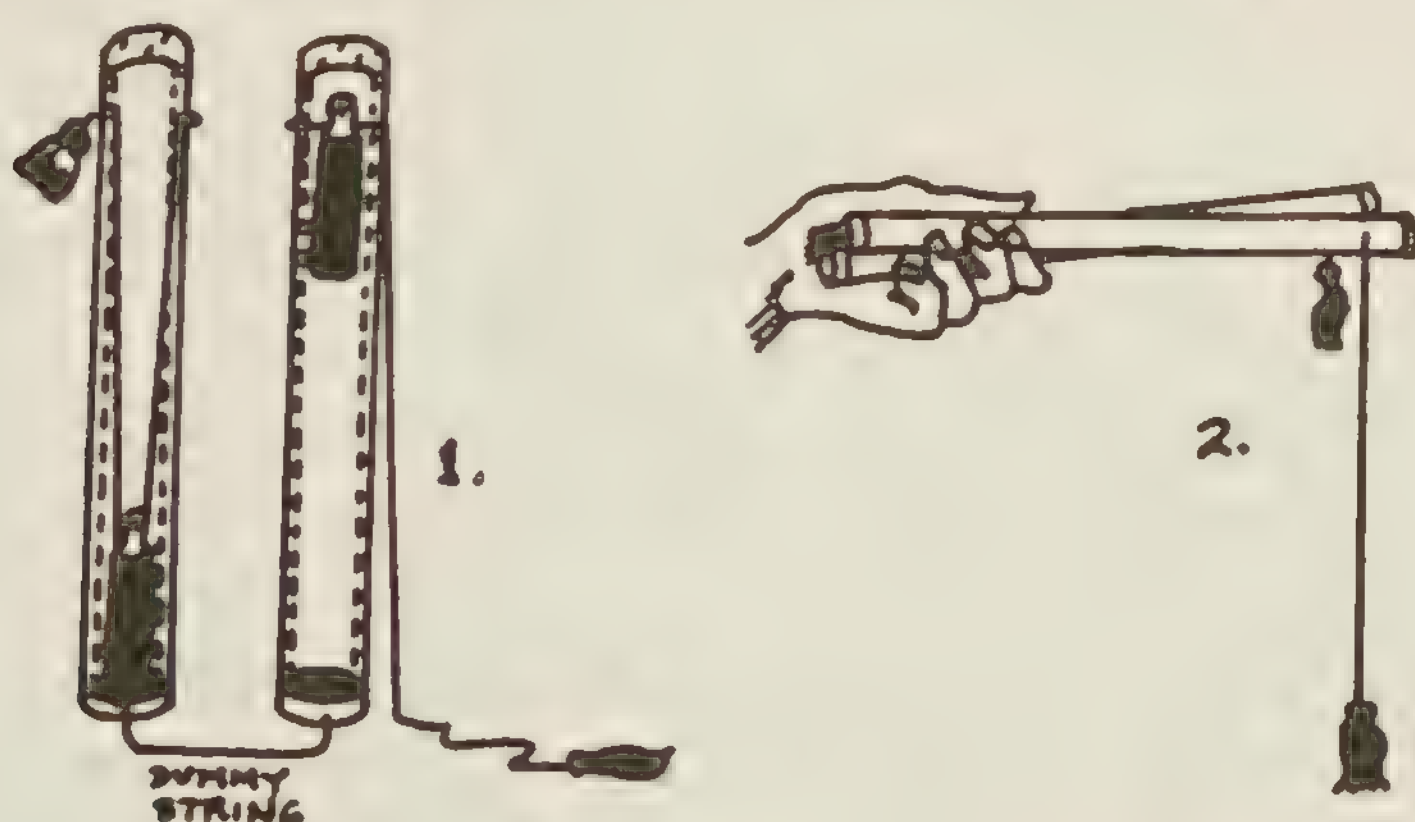
The trick is of Hindu origin, and its primitive form, while an improvement over the crude "Pillars of Solomon," still left much to be desired. The wands were made hollow, and were in no way connected. Each string had a bead or tassel on one end, and the other end passed into the wand where it was attached to a weight. Then the wands were held horizontally, and one string was pulled out so that the pulley was at the top of the wand.

When the magician pulled upon the shorter string, he simultaneously tilted the wands to a vertical position, and as he pulled the short string, the weight, falling in the other wand, drew in the long string. Thus an illusion was created. The string was apparently continuous, through both wands, and was merely drawn through by

the conjurer. Of course the wands could be separated, and when placed together, the string could be pulled through once more.

The one clue to the mystery was the fact that each cord was necessarily shorter than the wand from which it protruded, due to the presence of the weight. But in the improved "Hindu Wands," which are a product of Brema's mechanical ingenuity, the cords are longer than the wands!

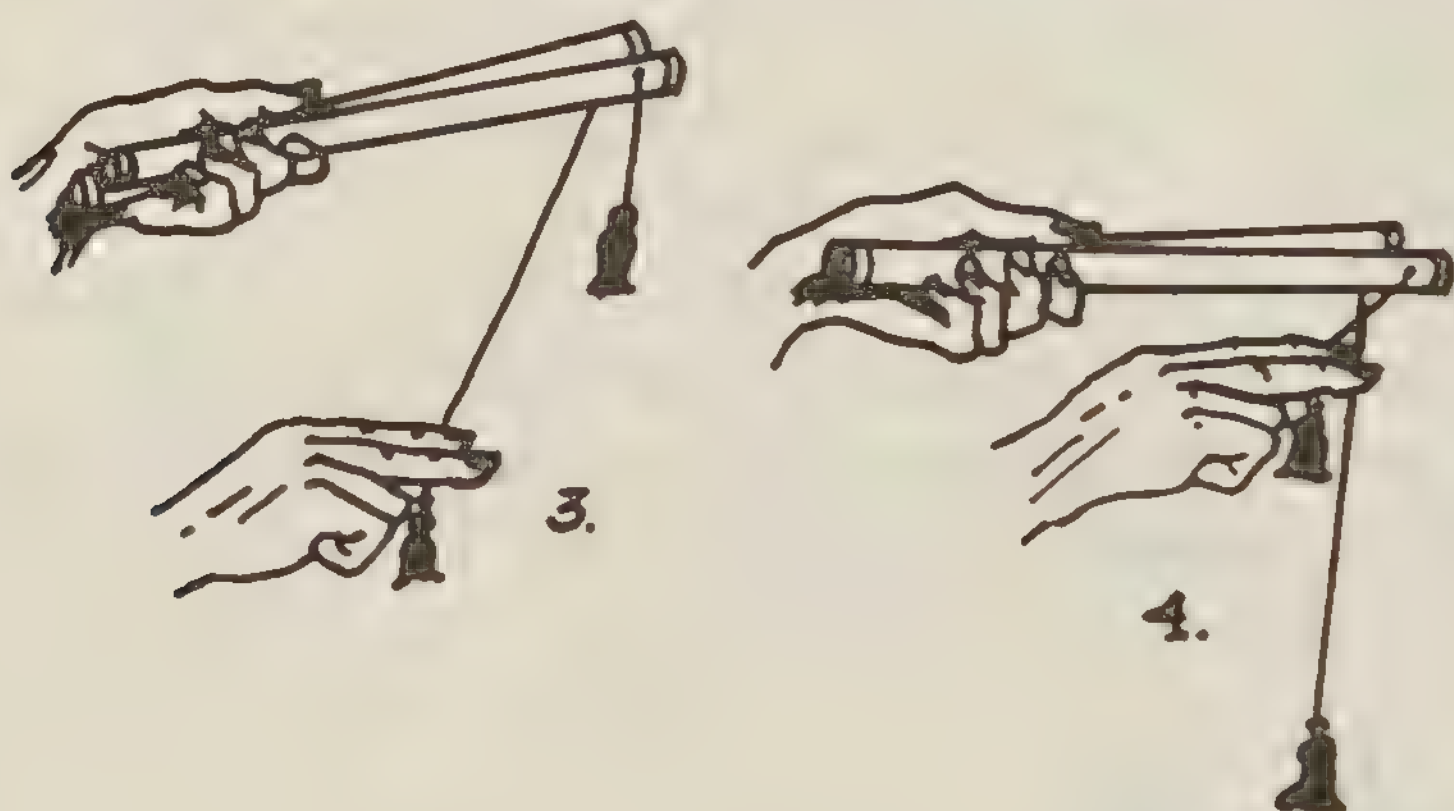
The construction is shown in Fig. 1. Each wand contains a lead weight, and there is a pulley at the top of the weight. The cord runs into the wand, through the pulley, and out at the other side of the wand, where a knot keeps it in place. The diagram shows one wand with the string pulled in; the other wand has the string extended. At



the bottom of each wand is a removable metal cap. These caps have holes in the center, and they are connected by a dummy string about three inches long. The purpose of this unnecessary string will be explained later, as it is an important feature of the mystery.

To begin with, the magician holds the wands as shown in Fig. 2, keeping the wands horizontal. He reaches underneath, takes hold of the short end, and pulls it out. At the same time, his left hand raises the outer ends of the wands very slightly. This tilting motion allows

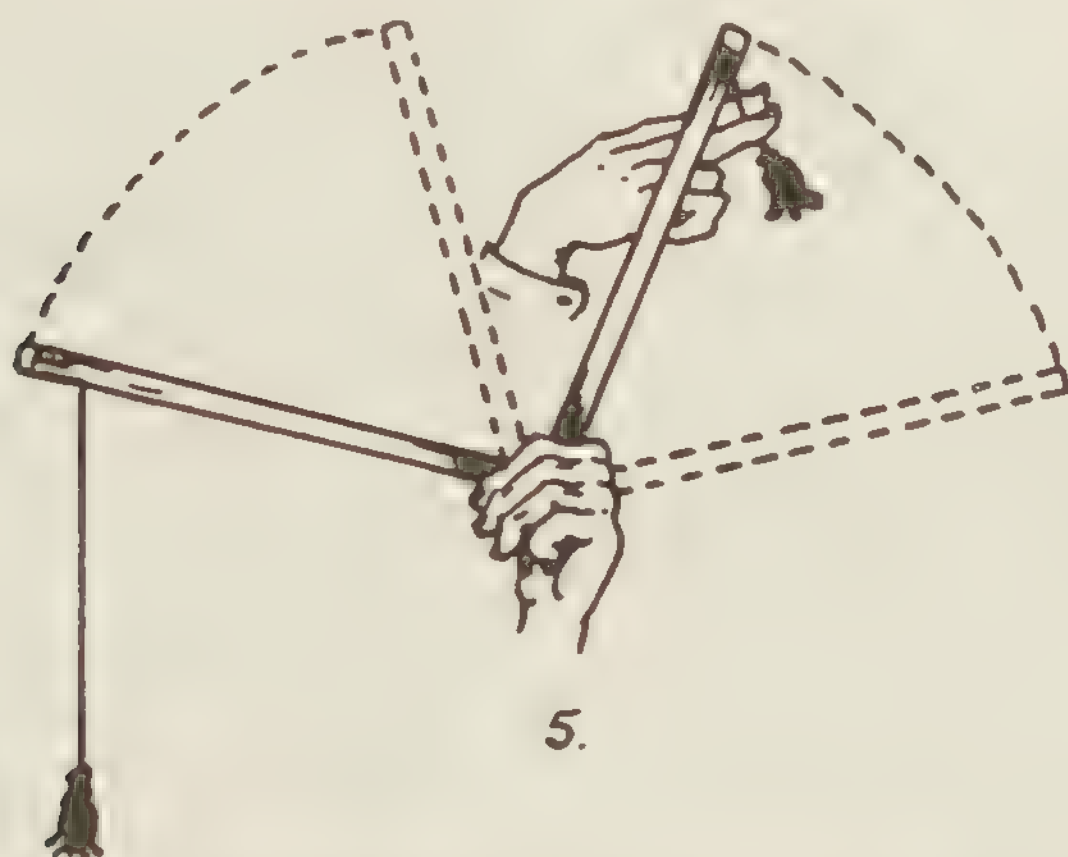
the pulley in the wand on the right to slide down, at approximately the speed with which the magician is drawing on the other string. To all appearances, the magician has pulled a single string through the



wands. (See Fig. 3.) Before he releases the dark tassel, the magician must take care to tilt the wands back to the horizontal. Then he takes hold of the light tassel (Fig. 4), and pulls it down, again tilting up the wands so that the dark tassel will be pulled upward.

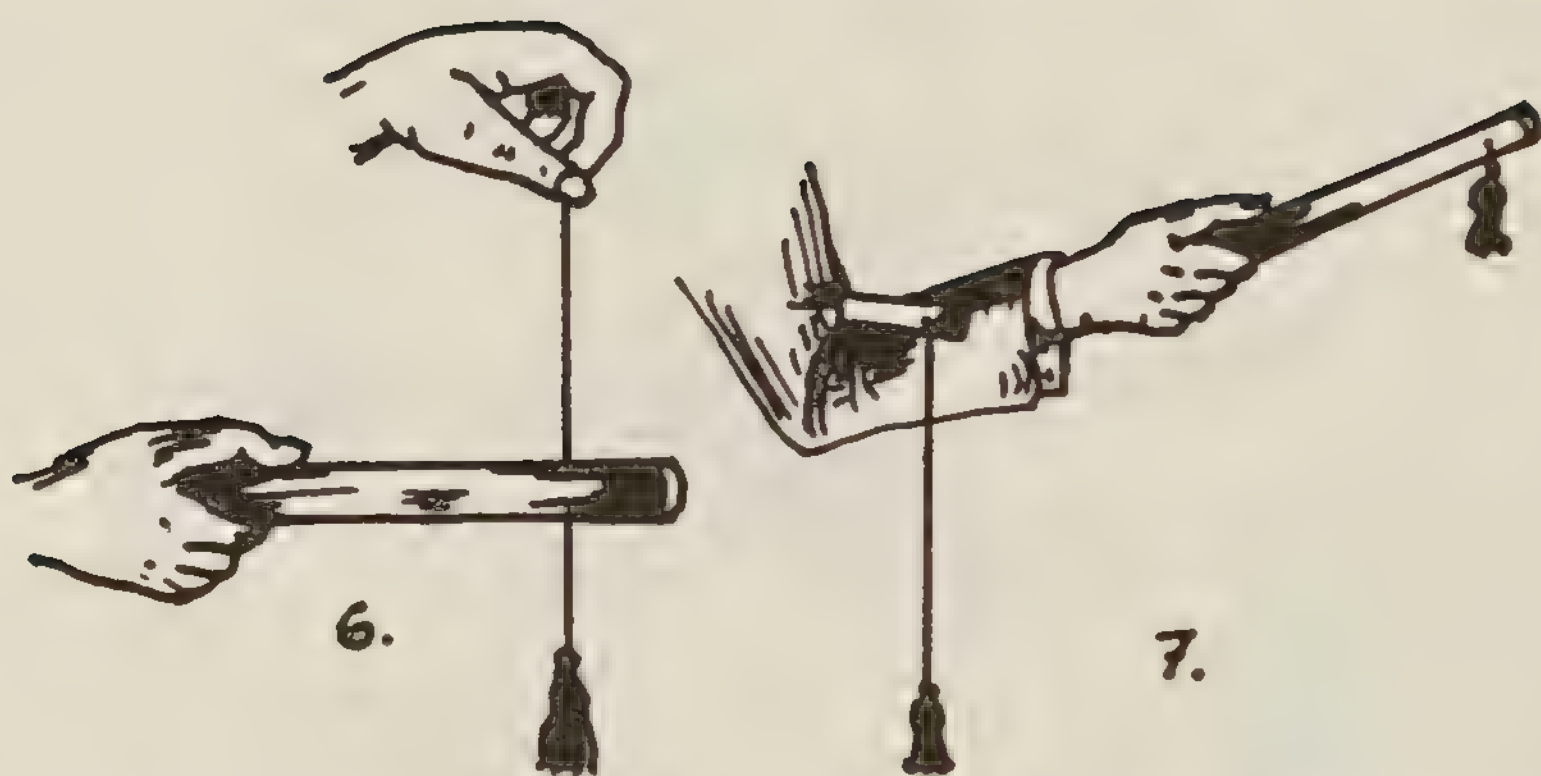
The wands are back to their original position (Fig. 2), and the magician takes a pair of scissors, and pretends to cut the string between them. He separates the wands, taking no precaution to hide the dummy string at the bottom, and bringing them together, goes through the original procedure, showing that the string has been "restored."

Then he holds the left wand vertically in his left hand, with the right wand horizontal. (See Fig. 5.) He pulls on the left (dark) tassel, at the same time tilting his hand so that the right wand becomes vertical. Of course the right (light) tassel rises to the wand, and thus the string has apparently been drawn back and forth, even though the ends of the wands have been held apart.



This procedure immediately throws the clever spectators on a false scent. They have detected the presence of the dummy string, and they think that they are witnessing an exhibition of the old "Pillars of Solomon." The magician overhears their remarks, and pretends to be confused. He finally points to the dummy string, and explains the old "Pillars of Solomon," leading the audience to suppose that they have actually discovered the secret. While the spectators are still jubilant, the magician picks up the scissors, and deliberately cuts the dummy string. Then he puts the wands together and goes through the original movements! The audience is nonplussed. Their pet theory has been shattered, and the effect is indescribable. No other trick provokes more astonishment than does the "Hindu Wands," at this particular stage of its procedure.

But further surprises are in store. The magician lays aside the light-tasseled wand, with its long string, and pretends to pull at the dark tassel, as though it will not move. He lays down the wand, and picks up the light-tasseled wand, drawing the string freely back and forth. (See Fig. 6.) Then he puts the wands together, and draws the string through again, making the light tassel short and the dark one long. By this time the audience is utterly bewildered.



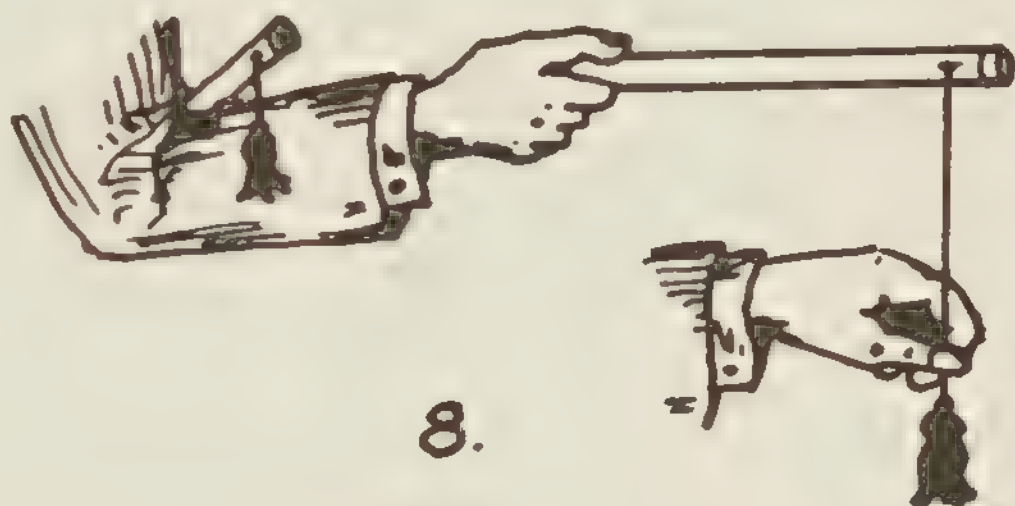
Then the magician sets the dark-tasseled wand in the crook of his right elbow, and holds the light-tasseled wand in his right hand. (See Fig. 7.) The wands are disconnected, and the magician explains that a magnetic current runs through his wrist. He pulls the light tassel with his left hand, and at the same time raises his right elbow. (See Fig. 8.) Down comes the light tassel, and up goes the dark one!

Then the wands are placed together, the string is drawn through again, and the wands are laid aside. The mystery is concluded.

Various other movements may be introduced prior to the finish of the trick, but their use is optional. Each performer should seek to employ his own variations. For example: a spectator may hold the wand with the short string. While the performer pulls the short string with one hand, he tilts up the other wand which he holds in his other hand. Or the spectator may hold the wand with the long string, then the magician pulls the short string, and at the same instant raises his wand so that it strikes the side of the wand which the spectator is holding, raising it towards the vertical, and making the string shorten. But no performer should attempt feats which require the assistance of a spectator until he has become exceedingly skillful, and sure of his ability to make the spectator do as he says. While the magician retains

the wands himself, he controls his own fate.

There is an interesting additional effect which may be shown with the Hindu wands, when the magician is holding them side by side. He pulls the long string back and forth through one wand. Then he seizes the knot of the short end, and pulls it, at the same time raising the wands towards the vertical. The long end grows short as the short end becomes long.



13. Brema's Confetti and Flower Bowls

This is a very pretty and effective trick.

The magician shows a small nickel-plated bowl, empty. He fills the bowl with confetti, and sets another bowl mouth to mouth with it. When the upper bowl is lifted, the confetti has doubled in quantity. It now heaps up and there is enough to fill both bowls.

The two bowls each filled with confetti are then placed mouth to mouth, and this time, when they are drawn apart, each one contains a bouquet of flowers.

Construction:

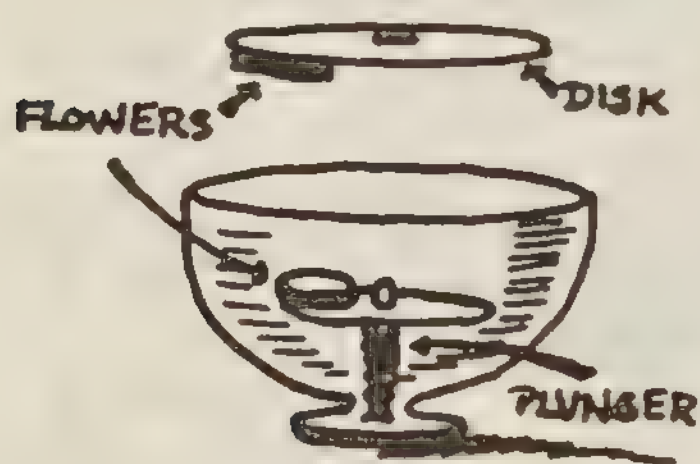
One bowl is unprepared, save for two tiny projections upon the interior.

The other bowl has a center shaft, which extends half-way up into the bowl. Around the shaft is a sliding plate, which moves up and down, with a spring beneath, so that it is normally up near the top of the bowl. A bouquet of "spring flowers"¹ is attached to the plate.

There is another plate, larger and loose, which has a bouquet attached to it.

¹Spring flowers are made of paper or silk and are kept open by tiny wire springs. They fold flat into a very small compass.

Preparation: The bouquets of flowers are folded and secured by rubber bands. The loose plate, with the flowers beneath, is set on the



center rod of the prepared bowl, after the springing plate has been pushed down. On the end of the center rod is a small point which engages the loose plate, and holds it in position. There are two slits in the loose plate, and a pair of scissors are inserted in these, in

order to cut the rubber bands, so that the flowers will spring open when released. The upper side of the loose plate is covered with confetti.

Working: The prepared bowl is set upside down on the table and the unprepared bowl is set upon it.

The empty bowl is shown and is placed upright on the table. It is filled with confetti, and the other bowl is carelessly placed upon it, mouth down. The two bowls are lifted and inverted. When the upper (unprepared bowl) is lifted, it seems to contain double the amount of confetti, thanks to the contents of the prepared bowl.

The confetti is swept into the empty bowl, and both bowls appear to be full, as the loose plate of the prepared bowl is covered with confetti.

The bowls are quickly placed mouth to mouth, the prepared bowl coming on top. The foot of the prepared bowl revolves, and when the magician turns it, the loose plate is released, falling into the lower bowl, where it is held by the tiny projections. As the upper bowl is removed and turned right side up, the flowers spring open, and both bowls are shown filled with flowers.

The following patter is appropriate for this trick:

“Here is a small bowl which contains nothing but atmosphere. I will fill it with confetti, and place another empty bowl upon it to keep

the confetti from trickling out. Now it happens that the confetti is Irish confetti—for it is very fond of Dublin. (Remove upper bowl.) In fact it has doubled to twice its previous amount.

“I will put the bowls together once more. We always associate confetti with weddings, and with weddings we associate flowers. Behold! (Draw bowls apart.) The confetti has changed to two beautiful bouquets which I will herewith donate to myself.”

14. The Illusion Top Table

“Black Art” tables and their advantages are described in the next section of this book.¹

The one drawback to the “Black Art” table is the fact that it requires a drapery of several inches. The “Illusion Top” table was devised by Brema to overcome this fault.

The table appears to be nothing more than a hollow box with a supporting post in the center. The magician uses it to keep articles in, and when the table is in use, the audience can see inside, and observe that it is empty, so apparently wells cannot be used.

Running from the center post to the back corners, inside the top, are two mirrors, which reflect the sides of the box. People looking in imagine that they are seeing the back of the box, because of the optical illusion.

Thus one-quarter of the interior of the box—a triangle at the rear—is hidden from view. The wells of the table (which has the usual “Black Art” pattern) are in that section, and the table may be utilized in the same manner as the regulation “Black Art” table.

¹Refer to Section V, Chapter 1.

SECTION V

Platform Magic

Platform Magic

WE COME NOW to that branch of magic which is probably broadest in its scope—the broad link between the impromptu conjurer and the stage illusionist.

As soon as a magician appears on a platform, he gains certain natural advantages that enable him to go into the field of special paraphernalia and showy apparatus. But the particular style of any one platform entertainment should by all means be suitable to conditions, for platform conditions vary.

The magician who is performing in a large room, or in a very small hall can use platform appliances, but he can also work very effectively in the audience, with small tricks, and he should use sleight of hand as much as possible, for the close range of the spectators will enable them to easily follow mysterious passes with cards, thimbles, or coins.

CHAPTER I.

Black Art Tables

YEARS AGO, MAGICIANS USED heavily draped tables, large enough to hold concealed assistants. As the art progressed, such tables were cut down in size, and were fitted with traps. Then the "Black Art Table" was invented, and it is now used by many magicians.

The "Black Art Table" is set upon a single upright leg. It has a drapery of four to eight inches, and the drapery and the covering of the table are both of black velvet.

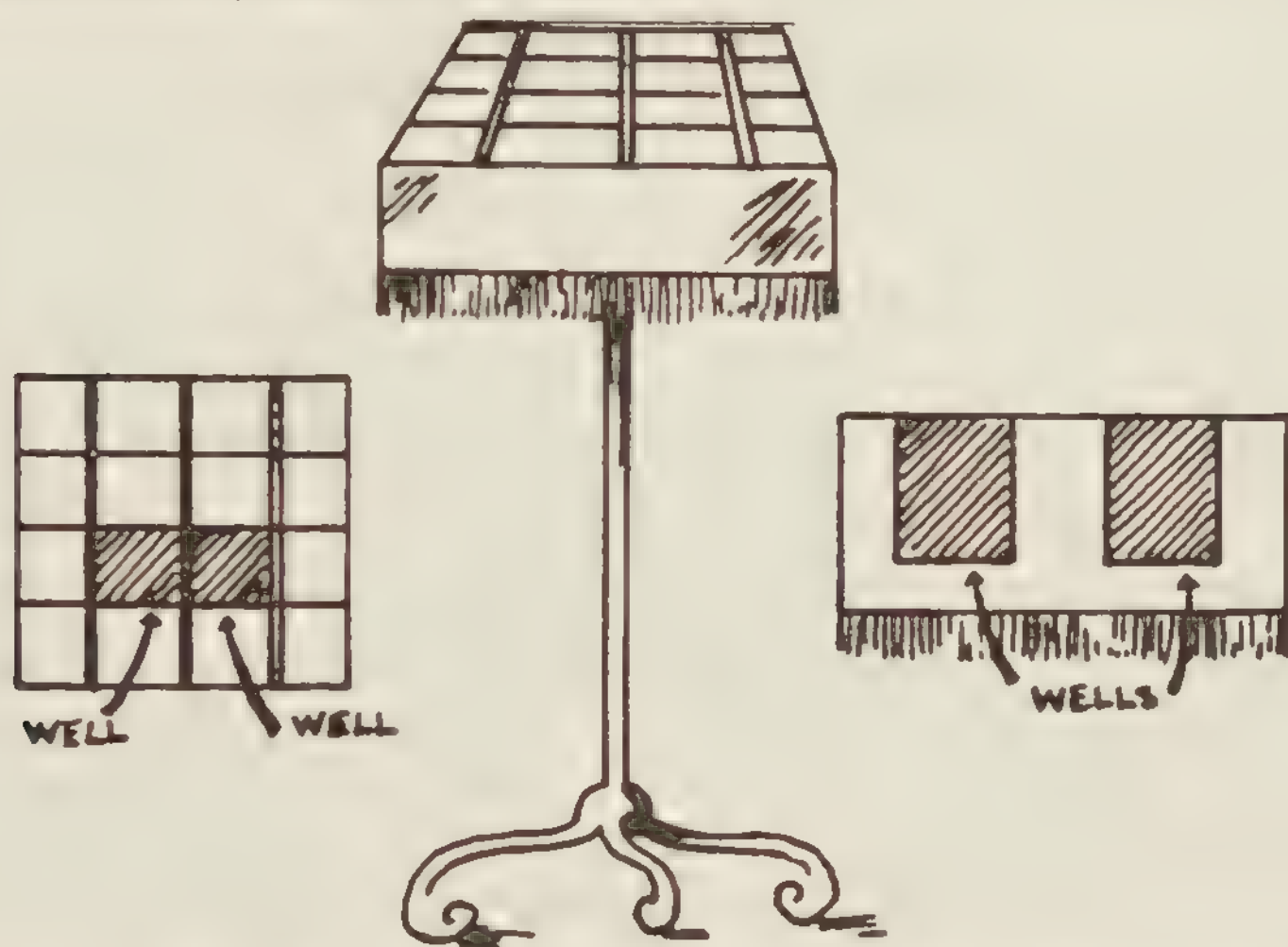
The bottom of the drapery is fringed with gold, and across the top appear ornamental strips of white, silver, gold, or yellow ribbon, which make a design of nine or twelve squares. Some tables have circular or geometric designs upon them, but the squares are most common, and are very practicable.

One, two, and sometimes three of the squares are holes in the table. Under the holes are pockets of black velvet. The edges of the holes are bounded by the strips of gold ribbon, and the contrast, of black and gold, forms a perfect illusion. From a distance of a few feet, a spectator cannot tell which squares are solid, and which are holes. The table top appears to be quite solid.

Whenever the magician has to dispose of a small article, he simply drops it in one of the holes (called "wells"). The object drops noiselessly out of sight. Such things as "False Fingers," miniature billiard balls, etc., are easily gotten rid of in this manner.

When the magician has a large fake that must be unloaded at the end of a trick, he again uses the well of the table. For this reason, such

fakes are usually painted black, so that spectators from a balcony cannot detect their presence in a well.



The appearance of a typical "Black Art" Table. The top is of black velvet. Observe the top view and the cross-section.

The wand is used as a means of misdirection in disposing of some articles. For instance, the magician apparently places a billiard ball in his left hand, but retains it in his right. The wand is lying on the table, in front of a black art well. In picking up the wand with his right hand, the magician places his palm over the well, and lets the ball fall. Then he touches his left hand with the wand, shows his left hand empty, tucks the wand under his arm, and casually shows that his right hand is also empty.

Or, he may start with the wand under his arm. He takes it from that position, with his right hand, touches his left with the wand, and in laying the wand on the table, drops the ball into a well.

These actions must be practiced neatly. A clumsy "getaway" is a very suspicious movement. But when the "Black Art Table" is properly utilized, it is a most valuable piece of apparatus. Its uses will be further explained in the succeeding chapters of this section.

CHAPTER II

Handkerchief Tricks

HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS ARE EXCELLENT for platform performances, as they are showy, yet not difficult to carry. Several years ago, a new handkerchief trick was invented, and this is the first time, to the author's knowledge, that it has ever been properly explained in a book on magic. It is called:

1. The Passe Passe Handkerchiefs

Two stands, two tubes, and two handkerchiefs are shown to the audience. Each stand has a base, a slender upright rod, and a short cylinder, mounted horizontally upon the rod. The cylinders are much shorter than the tubes, and the tubes slide into the cylinders.

The center tubes are apparently used merely as holders for the nickel-plated cylinders, but they serve a more important purpose.

Two handkerchiefs are placed in one tube (which we will call No. 1). The tube is set in one of the stands. The other tube (No. 2) is placed in the second stand, after it has been shown empty. At the magician's command, the handkerchiefs pass from tube No. 1 to tube No. 2.

The secret lies in two fakes, one for each tube. These fakes are very short inner tubes, painted black. Each inner tube has a fluted rim on one end, so that it can be pushed into the nickel-plated tube, but will not pass through. If the fluted end is held towards the audience, the inner lining will not be seen, but will appear to be part of the outer tube.

Tube No. 1, at the outset, contains its inner tube. Tube No. 2 has the inner tube, which contains two handkerchiefs.



Illustration of Passe Passe Tube, showing tube in stand; one of the cylinders, and concealed inner tube.

The magician exhibits the two stands, and shows that their cylinders are empty. He takes tube No. 2 and pushes it through the cylinder of one stand. The fluted end of the inner tube, which goes in last, catches on a projection within the cylinder, so, as tube No. 2 emerges, it is empty, and can be shown so. Then it is pushed back into the cylinder, and it picks up the inner tube again. The side of the cylinder and the tube is towards the spectators during this operation.

Two handkerchiefs are pushed into tube No. 1. They go into the inner tube. Tube No. 1 is placed in the other cylinder.

The magician takes tube No. 2 out of its cylinder, and draws the handkerchiefs from it, saying that they have passed from tube No. 1. He must then show tube No. 1 empty. He does this by pulling it through the cylinder, leaving the inner tube, and its two handkerchiefs, within the cylinder.

The trick may be effectively included with the aid of a "Black Art Table." The magician pushes the tubes back into the cylinders. Then he draws out tube No. 1, picking up the inner tube. He sets the tube down on the table, where the handkerchiefs are lying, and lets the inner tube fall into the well. Then he can pick up the handkerchiefs, drape them over one stand, and show both tubes empty, and the cylinders empty as well. The inner tube in tube No. 2 makes no difference if the fluted end is kept towards the audience.

One of the handkerchiefs used in each tube should have a cardboard disc sewn in the corner. The disc acts as a plug, when the handker-

chiefs are pushed into the inner tubes, so the handkerchiefs will remain safely in position.

2. The Red Cross and the Stars and Stripes

This is the author's improvement on an old trick, and it makes a very effective item.

The magician shows three handkerchiefs, red, white and blue. He rolls up a paper cylinder, and picking up the handkerchiefs, states that he will push them through the cylinder, and that they will blend together to form a well-known flag.

As he pushes the handkerchiefs into the cylinder, he accidentally drops the blue one. This makes the audience chuckle, for every one knows that an American flag is to be formed, and the blue silk is missing!

But when the magician draws out the silk at the top of the cylinder, the red and white have united to form a Red Cross flag! The laugh is on the audience. The magician appears to be perplexed. Then he sees the blue handkerchief on the floor, where he dropped it. He picks up the blue handkerchief, and pushes it through the tube, with the Red Cross flag. This time Old Glory emerges from the top of the tube, and is draped over the front of the table. The cylinder is unrolled, and shown to be absolutely empty.

The secret lies in a short inner tube, painted black. This tube may be made of cardboard or of metal. It has a loose bag arrangement affixed to the center, so that it may be filled from one end with silk, but when handkerchiefs are pushed in the other end, the first supply of silk will be ejected.

Into one end of the tube, the magician puts an American flag. Then he pushes a Red Cross flag in above it.

The tube is laid on the table, covered by the red, white and blue handkerchiefs.

The magician shows a piece of heavy paper, slightly bent like a cylinder. With his left hand, he picks up the three handkerchiefs, and before they are clear of the table, he lays the paper in their place, so that it covers the black tube, the fake used in the trick.

He again lays the silks on the table, and picks up the paper, rolling it into a cylinder with the fake inside it. He pushes the red and white handkerchiefs into the cylinder, dropping the blue on the floor, without noticing it. The Red Cross flag is ejected. Then it is pushed in with the blue silk handkerchief, and out comes the American flag. The flag is quite large, and the paper cylinder is quite long. So the flag hangs out of the cylinder after it has been completely ejected from the inner tube. The magician lowers his hands to the table, and as his left hand pulls the end of the flag down to the top of the table, the right hand releases pressure, and the fake falls from the lower end of the cylinder into the black art well. Thus after the flag has been produced, the cylinder of paper may be shown empty.

3. The Cylinder and the Glass

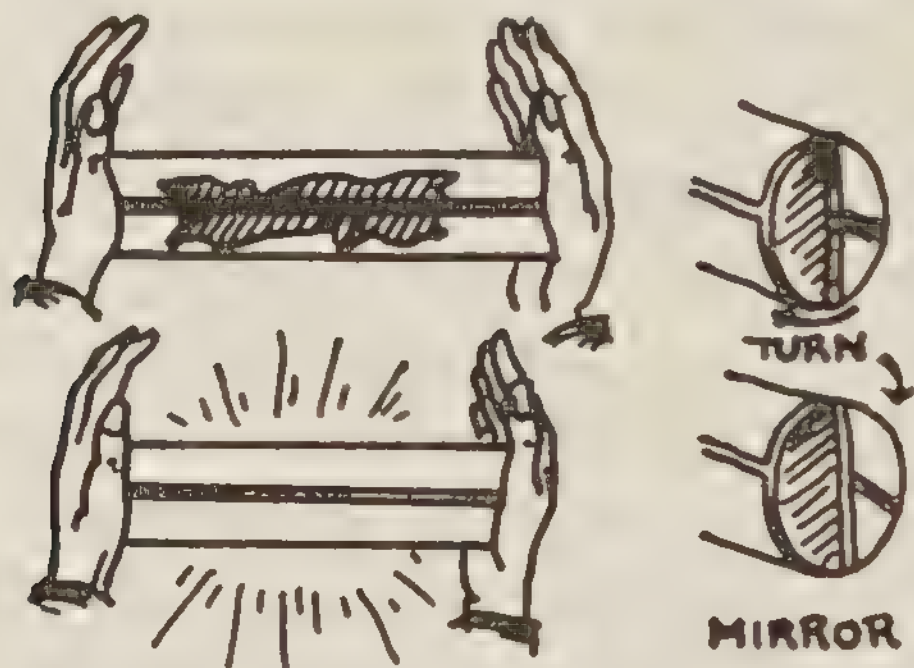
Two blue handkerchiefs are tied together and placed in an empty glass. A red handkerchief is placed in a glass cylinder, which is reinforced with long, narrow metal bands. The red handkerchief instantly disappears in full view. The blue handkerchiefs are pulled from the glass, and the red is tied between them!

Metal mirrors are used in this trick. The glass has an upright mirror in the center. The glass is fluted, and appears to be empty, as the mirror creates an optical illusion. But in back of the mirror (which is polished on both sides) are two blue handkerchiefs, with a red one tied between them, rolled so that the red will not show. The glass appears to be empty.

Two blue handkerchiefs are tied together and placed in the front compartment of the glass. When the glass is set on the table, it is

turned around. Its appearance is the same, but now the two blue handkerchiefs and the one red handkerchief are in front.

The cylinder also contains a double-faced metal mirror. Its edges are hidden by the metal bands. (The best cylinders are made of transparent celluloid.)



The magician holds the cylinder between his palms, after placing the red silk in front of the mirror. He holds the cylinder horizontally, and with a tossing movement gives it a semi-revolution. The red handkerchief immediately

disappears, and is found between the two blue handkerchiefs in the glass. Both the glass and cylinder then appear to be empty.

4. The Patriotic Handkerchiefs

The magician exhibits three small sugar bowls, and sets each on upon a small stand. He takes three red handkerchiefs, ties them in a string, rolls them up, and places them in the first bowl. In the second bowl he places three white handkerchiefs, while three blue handkerchiefs go into the third bowl.

The magician then states that the handkerchiefs are patriotic by nature, and that the three colors, red, white, and blue, cannot long remain separated. Going to each bowl in turn, he pulls out the string of handkerchiefs which it contains, and each string consists of a red, a white, and a blue handkerchief!

The bowls contain mirrors, just like the glass described in the preceding trick. Glasses may be used, but the bowls are better, because the handles of each bowl hide the edges of the mirror. In back of each mirror is a string of three handkerchiefs, red, white, and blue, but in

the first bowl, the red handkerchief is wrapped around the outside of the packet; in the second bowl, the white handkerchief surrounds the bundle, while the blue handkerchief hides the red and white in the third bowl.

When the magician rolls up three red handkerchiefs and puts them in the first bowl, the bowl appears to be empty. In transferring the bowl from one hand to the other, the magician deliberately reverses it. As the packet of silks is still red, no one realizes that an exchange has taken place.

The procedure is repeated with the two remaining bowls, and after the handkerchiefs have been removed, the bowls appear to be empty.

CHAPTER III

Production Tricks

IN DAYS GONE BY, magicians were wont to produce all manner of articles from borrowed hats. But since the old-fashioned "stovepipe" has passed into oblivion, and derby hats are not as satisfactory, the "Hat Productions" have been generally discarded, and ingenious pieces of apparatus have taken their place.

Foremost among these is:

1. The Wonder Screen

The "Wonder Screen" is a small threefold screen. The magician exhibits it, folded in a triangle, and shows all sides. Then he unfolds the screen, and shows the interior. He folds it again, and reaching inside the triangle, brings forth a great many handkerchiefs and other objects. He shows the screen empty occasionally; but the productions continue.

"Wonder Screens" vary in height from one to three feet. They all operate the same way. The center panel is double, and is attached at the bottom. The two sections of the panel open to form a V, strips of cloth holding the two parts together.

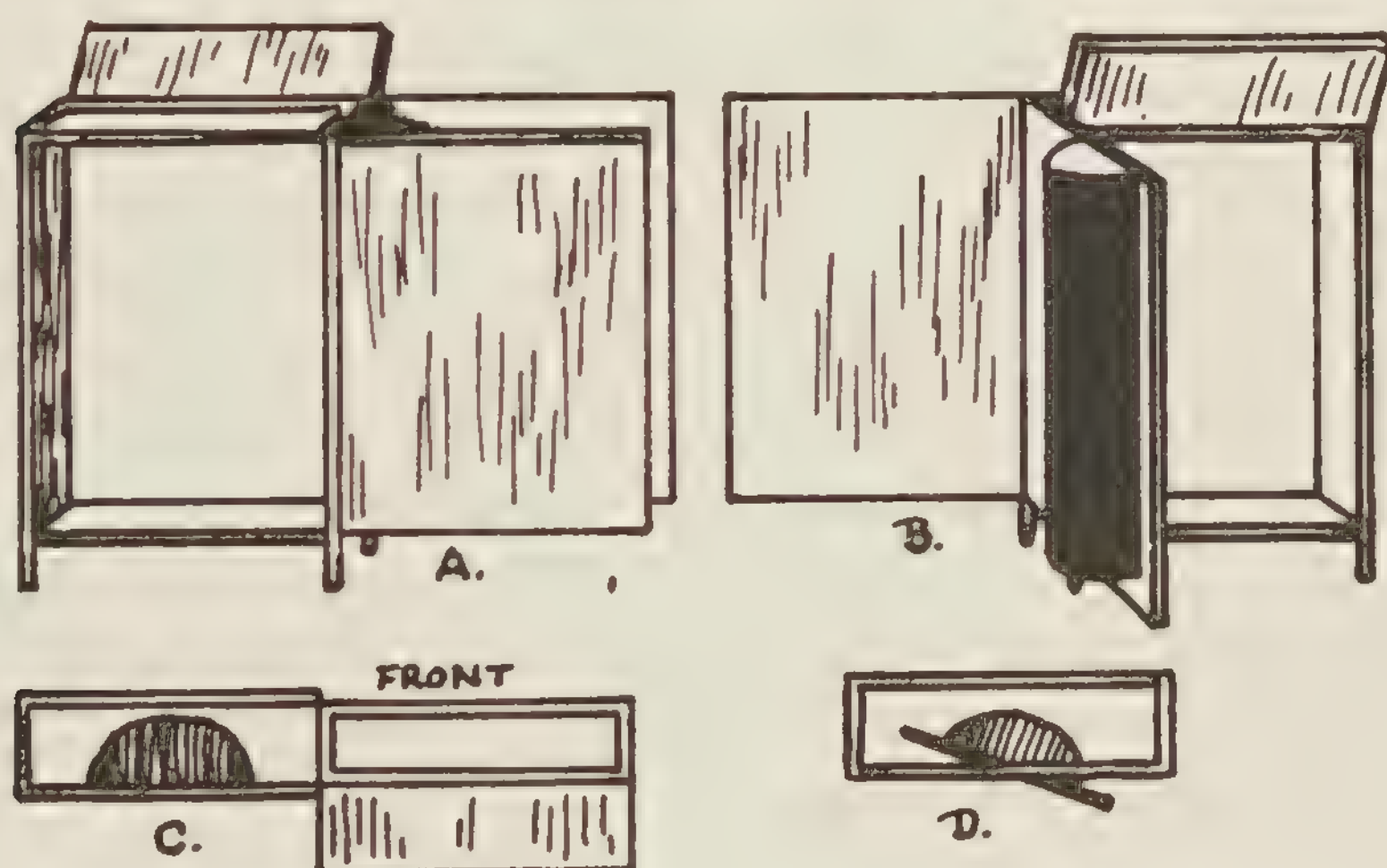
A quantity of compressible articles is placed in the V shaped receptacle. The magician then folds the screen in the form of a triangle, and tilts the V so that it hangs inside. He can then pick up the screen, which is mounted on legs, and show all sides. When he turns the opening of the screen towards the audience, he tilts the screen backward, and the V compartment tilts out the back so that the in-

terior may be shown. Then he makes the triangle again, tilts the screen forward, and reaching in, produces articles. He may show the screen empty at any time. The screen folds flat at the conclusion.

Many individual performers have their own pet methods of handling the "Wonder Screen," and it is a very effective trick.

2. The Wonder Cabinet

This contrivance holds a bulkier "load" than the "Wonder Screen." It is an upright cabinet, more than a foot high, with doors in front, back, and top. The front and back doors both open to the left.



Views of the "Wonder Cabinet." A—Front view, cabinet apparently empty. B—Rear view, showing hidden container. C—Top view of open cabinet. D—The revolving panel in operation.

The back door has a revolving panel. A metal half-cylinder is attached to one side of the panel, and it holds the "load."

The cylinder is first inside the cabinet. The magician shows the outside of the cabinet on the table. He revolves the panel. This lets him open the front door and show the interior of the cabinet. He opens the

back door, and the top, showing a clear view through. The open front door hides the cylinder on the back door.

Then he closes the back, and the front, in the order named. He revolves the panel, and reaching in, produces articles. The cabinet may be shown at any time.

In his "load," the magician should have a few dozen compressible flowers (called "spring flowers"). After a brief production, he drops these flowers in the cabinet as he revolves the cylinder to the back. The flowers, when released, fill the cabinet, and when the front door is opened they pour forth very effectively.

3. The Breakaway Cabinet

This is an improved form of the "Wonder Cabinet." It is in the form of a small chest, with a handle on top. The magician first shows the outside of the cabinet. Then he revolves a panel which throws the cylinder containing the "load" to the back of the chest. The front, bottom, and sides of the cabinet are then released, and the whole affair falls down into a flat, cross-shaped board, the top being the upper portion of the cross. This makes the cabinet appear absolutely empty. It is folded up together again, the back being kept out of sight. Then the cylinder is revolved into the interior. The production is made through one end of the cabinet.

4. The Flag Vase

The "Flag Vase" is a tall metal cylinder mounted on a pedestal. It appears to be empty, and the magician fills it with water. Then, reaching in, he produces a quantity of handkerchiefs, a long string of vari-colored paper, and a large flag. Then the water is poured out of the vase.

In the center of the vase is a cylinder, covered with a metal cap. It contains the "load." The interior of the vase is painted black, so the

vase appears empty when shown. The magician pushes his wand down inside the vase to show that its depth is correct. The wand goes between the cylinder and the side of the vase.

The water does not go in the center cylinder, thanks to the metal cap. The cap is removed, and articles are produced, the cap coming out under cover of handkerchiefs. The coil of paper is hidden in the base of the vase, and it runs into the cylinder. As the paper is drawn out, it unrolls, and is whirled around the wand, making a very effective display.

CHAPTER IV

Miscellaneous Tricks

1. The Sucker Die Box (With Improvements)

It is not known who invented this trick, but the anonymous creator deserves a great deal of credit, for the "Die Box" never seems to lose its popularity.

A small cabinet is introduced. It has four doors, two in front, and two on top. The magician opens the door, and removes a solid wooden block, painted to resemble a die. The block is three or four inches square, and takes up one compartment of the box.

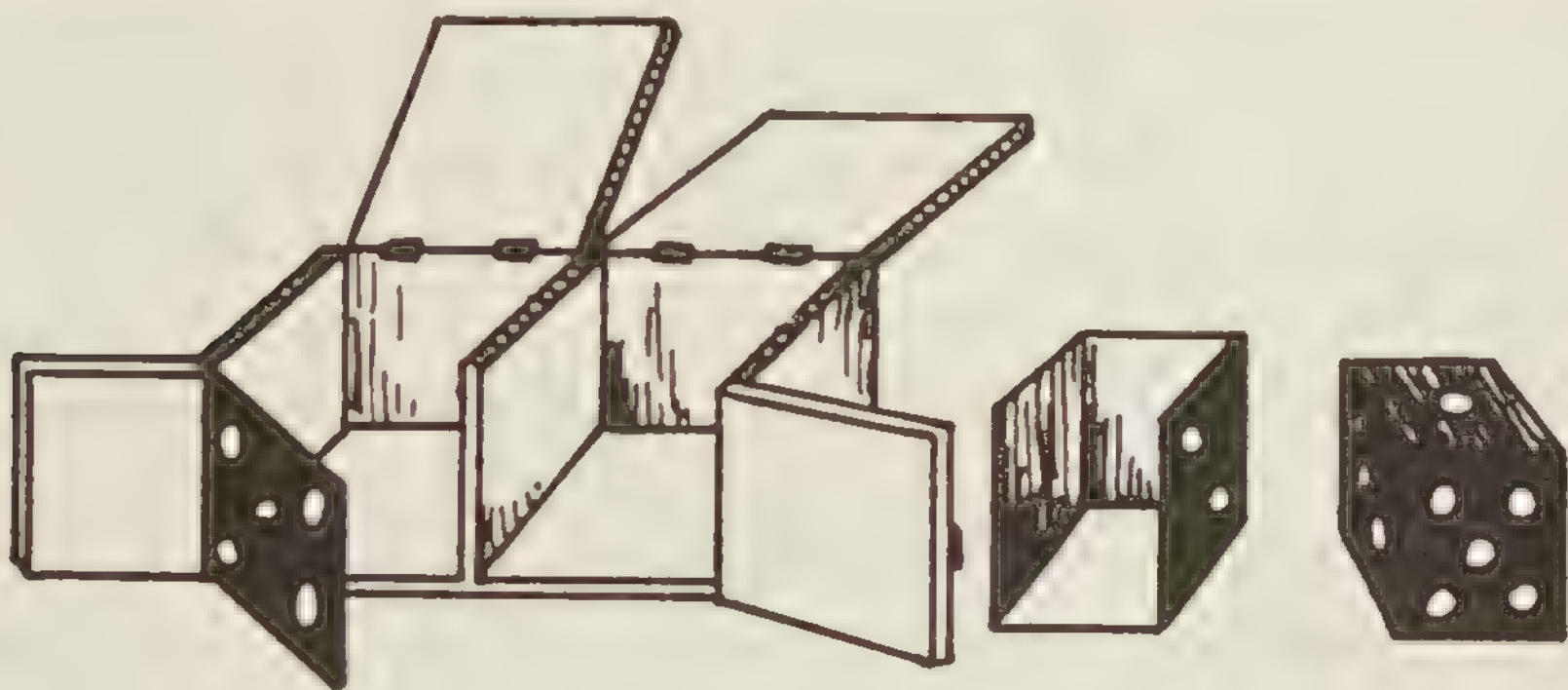
The magician states that he will cause the die to travel from the box to a near-by hat, and that he can make the transposition either visible or invisible. Of course every one wants to see the die pass visibly, so the magician calmly removes it from the box and places it in the hat!

No one is satisfied with this, so the magician essays the invisible transposition. He puts the die back in the box, and closes the doors. He shows one compartment empty, and tilts the box so that people can hear it slide to the other compartment. Then the magician opens the doors of the compartment which the die has just left.

He keeps up this byplay under a constant fire of demands by the audience. Every one wants to "see both sides at once," and finally the magician, after pretending to misunderstand, opens all four doors, and shows that the die has gone. He immediately removes the die from the hat.

The regulation "Die Box" has a sliding weight in the bottom, which is double. The die is solid, but has a four-sided metal shell that covers it. When the magician visibly puts the die into the hat, he puts

in both the shell and the die, the shell covering six sides of the black.



The "Die Box," illustrating the secret door, the shell, and the solid die. The shell, of course, is painted to resemble the die.

In taking the die from the hat, the magician only removes the shell, holding it so that it appears to be the actual die. He holds the back of the box towards the audience, and sets the die in the box so that the open sides of the shell come under the top and front doors of one compartment. Then he closes the doors.

The compartments are actually divided by a solid wall. The shell does not slide when the magician tilts the box; the sliding weight in the bottom of the box makes the noise.

The magician can open either compartment. The shell will not be seen for it fits against the sides, bottom and back of the compartment, and as the whole interior of the box and the shell is painted black, the compartment appears to be empty.

The magician leads on the audience, and finally shows the box entirely empty; whereupon he removes the die from the hat.

Various improvements have been made in the construction of the "Die Box." The best of these is a trick door that fits in the front of the compartment opposite the one where the shell is placed. The door is double, having a metal piece, and by a turn of the knob, both the

actual door and its metal piece may be opened together, or the door alone may be opened.

The metal piece is painted to represent the side of a die. Thus the magician may "accidentally" expose the die while he is tilting the box back and forth, or he may deliberately show the "die" in the box before he commences the tilting procedure. This adds greatly to the effectiveness of the trick, and all modern "Die Boxes" have the tricky door.

Carl Brema has invented a "Die Box" in which handkerchiefs are placed in the hat. When the die is taken from the hat, the handkerchiefs are gone, and the silks appear in place of the die in the box. This is effected by means of a hollow die in the hat, and a secret compartment in the back of the box that releases two hidden handkerchiefs. The back wall of the box drops, when the catch is turned, and the handkerchiefs make their appearance.

2. Solid Through Solid

The magical effect of apparently passing one solid body through another came into vogue several years ago. The trick was presented in various forms, but many of the methods proved impractical, and others required cumbersome apparatus. The one piece of apparatus that has best stood the test of time is called the "Handkerchief Frame."

The best form of the "Handkerchief Frame" is a square frame, about a foot in length on each side. It appears to be a smooth, heavy picture-frame, and the magician affixes a handkerchief to it, by means of thumb-tacks, every corner of the cloth being securely fastened.

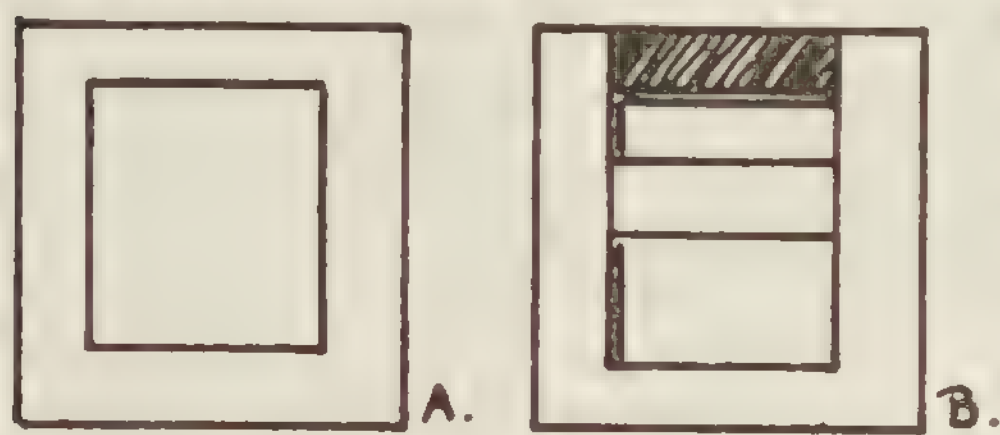
The frame is placed in a paper bag, and the magician thrusts various articles through the bag, apparently destroying the handkerchief. But when the frame is removed, the cloth is as good as ever.

The secret lies in the frame. One side of one end is loose, and it slides down the frame on a little track which appears merely to be an

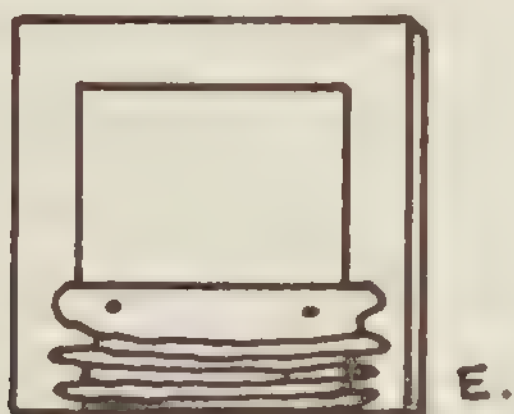
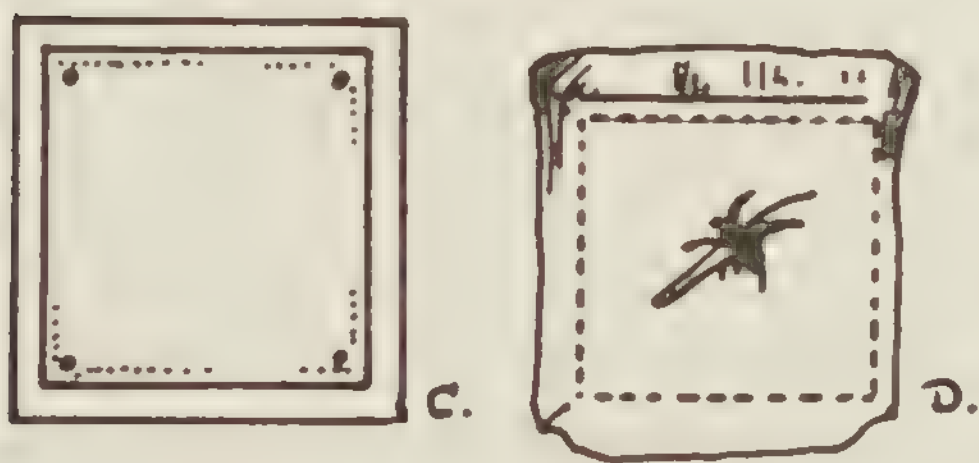
ornamental moulding.

When the movable slide is in its proper position, the frame may be examined. To prevent any one from detecting its presence, the magician pushes long thumb-tacks through the end of the frame from the other side. These engage the movable slide, and it is securely held in position.

The tacks are then pried out, and the magician attaches the hand-



kerchief, but this time he pushes the tacks into the movable slide, putting the handkerchief on that side of the frame. The tacks do not completely penetrate the movable slide.



The magician drops the frame in the paper bag, and pushing the slide with his thumb, lets it slip to the bottom of the frame. Then he cuts a hole right through the bag, with a knife. He pushes a wand through the bag, and then draws several large silk handkerchiefs through. The handkerchief on the frame is not touched.

A—The frame. B—Sliding portion of frame. C—Handkerchief tacked on frame. D—Frame enclosed in bag; article pushed through. E—How the handkerchief slides down inside the bag.

table. This allows the handkerchief to stretch out on the frame. The magician pours water through the hole in the center of the bag. The

The next procedure is very artful. The magician inverts the bag as he steps to the

water, of course, filters through the handkerchief.

He then holds the bag so that the slide slips down to the bottom once more, whereupon he pushes his arm right through the center of the paper bag. Then he inverts the bag; the handkerchief again stretches tight, and as he reaches in to pull out the frame, the magician takes care to press the movable slide firmly back in its original position at the end of the frame.

When the frame comes out of the bag, the audience is puzzled. The handkerchief is *wet*, which proves that the water went through; yet the solid objects apparently went through also. Thus the use of the water causes deep perplexity, and "Solid Through Solid" becomes a real mystery.

3. The Vanishing Alarm Clock

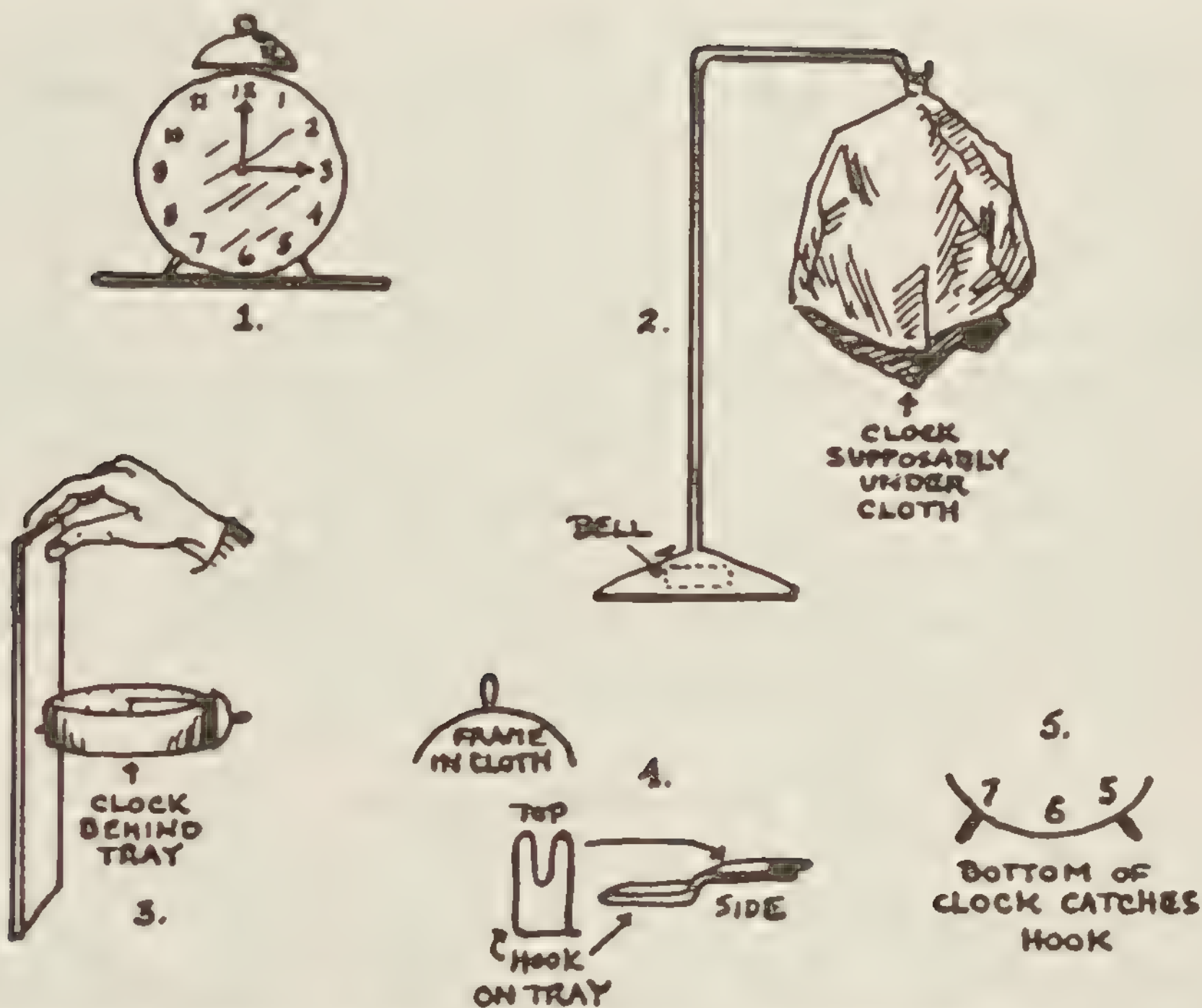
An assistant approaches the magician with an alarm clock on a tray. The magician covers the alarm clock with a cloth. The ring of the clock comes through the top, and the magician carries the clock to a nickeled stand, where he hangs the clock, and starts the bell ringing.

Suddenly, while the bell is ringing, he snatches away the cloth, and folds it up. The clock has disappeared!

The clock has a bolt on the bottom, and this engages a raised groove in the center of the tray. In the cloth is a collapsible metal shape that has a protruding ring. This causes the form of the alarm clock to appear beneath the cloth. As the magician lifts the cloth with the dummy clock, the assistant tilts the tray so the bottom is towards the audience, and walks off stage with the clock on the tray.

The nickeled stand has a bicycle bell in the base. When the magician pretends to start the alarm ring, he really starts the bicycle bell. As he snatches up the cloth, he stops the bell, and the clock seems to vanish while ringing.

Some stands are automatic; the weight of the clock makes the bell



1. The clock on the tray. 2. Clock covered with cloth and hanging on stand. 3. Where the clock goes. 4. Details of frame in cloth, and hook on tray. 5. Device on bottom of clock, to fit in hook.

ring, and the taking away of the cloth stops the ringing.

Some magicians use a clock dial in the cloth; it allows them to apparently give a quick glimpse of the clock while it is hanging on the stand.

4. The Vanishing Bowl

This is the prototype of the “Vanishing Alarm Clock.” A bowl of water is used, and the water is poured in, in plain view. A ring is in the cloth, and preserves the shape of the rim of the bowl. The assistant carries the bowl away on the tray; the water does not come out, because there is a flat metal disc just below the edge of the bowl. A

small opening in the disc lets the water pour down into the bowl, and that opening is at the top when the assistant holds the tray vertically.

The cloth is sometimes made with little metal legs that enable the magician to show the whole shape of the bowl beneath the cloth, and to set it down upon an undraped table. When the cloth is shaken, the bowl apparently disappears.

Some magicians use the principle of the tray and the assistant to vanish a phonograph. This, of course, is a stage trick, and a large cloth must be used. The cloth preserves the shape of the talking machine, and the magician stands near the back of the stage, while a phonograph behind the curtain plays music which seems to come from the machine which the spectators think is beneath the cloth.

5. The New Rice Bowls

The "Rice Bowls" is a Chinese trick, performed with success by the famous Ching Ling Foo, and other Chinese magicians.

In effect, a brass bowl is filled to the brim with rice. Another bowl is placed mouth to mouth with it. When the upper bowl is lifted, the rice has doubled in quantity.

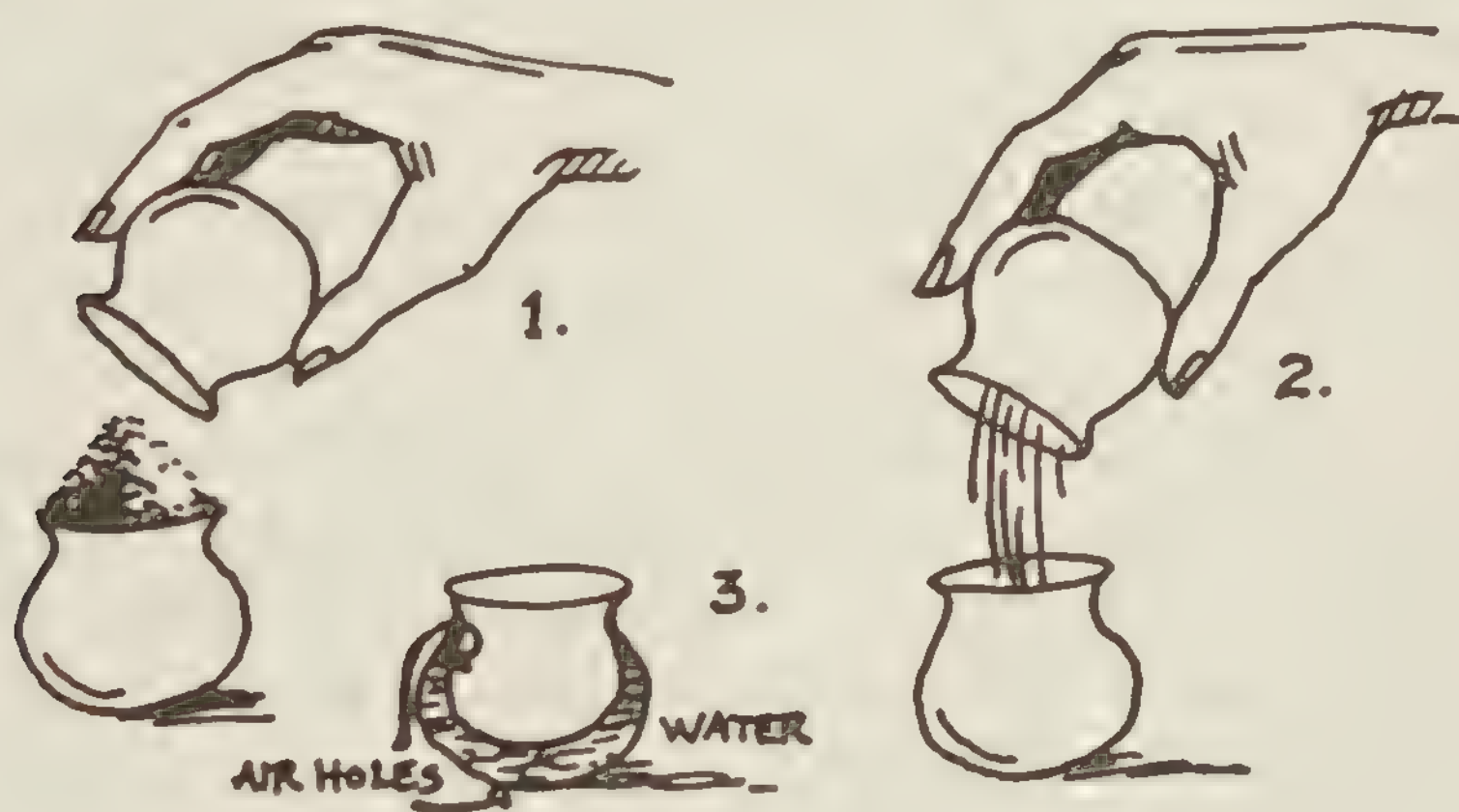
The rice is leveled off; the bowls are placed mouth to mouth, once more, and this time, the rice changes to water, which is poured from bowl to bowl.

The original method involved a piece of celluloid, which kept a supply of water hidden in the upper bowl. The interior of the upper bowl could not be shown at the beginning of the trick, and the removal of the celluloid disc was a somewhat uncertain procedure. Some magicians still prefer to use the old bowls, but others employ a new style set which is safer to perform with.

One bowl has a false bottom. This cannot be seen, because of the bulging sides of the bowl, and the fact that the interior is painted black. The false compartment is larger than the visible interior of the

bowl, and it is filled with water, through a small hole. There is a hole in the bottom of the bowl, which is plugged with wax, after the compartment is filled with water.

The magician fills the ordinary bowl with rice. The prepared bowl is placed on it and both are inverted. When the ordinary bowl is lifted, the rice appears to be doubled because the prepared bowl holds less than half of the rice, and the rest piles up and overflows.



1. Showing how the rice doubles in quantity. 2. Rice transformed to water. 3. Construction of the fake bowl. Note: The bowls are illustrated in miniature size. In platform performances, larger bowls are used.

The rice is leveled and some is thrown from the prepared bowl. The ordinary bowl is placed on and both are inverted. The magician removes the wax, and the water pours down into the lower bowl. Then the bowls are separated. As the water is poured from the ordinary into the prepared bowl it seems to increase in quantity, as it overflows the shallow bowl. The rice that remains is not noticeable.

CHAPTER V

Spirit Tricks

“SPIRIT TRICKS” ARE VERY POPULAR nowadays, and many magicians perform pseudo-seances on the platform or stage. These are not intended as anti-spiritualistic exhibitions, but their purpose is to demonstrate that phenomena of an apparently psychic nature can be produced by natural means, through the ability of the modern magician.

Some very popular spirit tricks are explained in this chapter. The reader will probably be surprised at the simplicity of the methods, but he should remember that the setting of the stage, the music, and general atmosphere all add to the mystery of the occasion, and are powerful agents in misdirection.

The first seven tricks in this section represent forms of imitation spirit communication. The magician must introduce methods by which he learns the answers to certain questions; for example, he can “force” a playing card. He can add up a series of numbers and secretly add the total, or he may “force” a total. He can have confederates in the audience ask certain questions which have been pre-arranged. Comedy is often introduced, but it should not be overdone. The explanations of the following tricks deal entirely with the mechanical operation of the various devices, which, in themselves, are really mysterious.

1. The Rapping Hand

The “Rapping Hand” is a carved wooden hand that rests on a sheet of

glass, and taps by tilting itself forward until the fingers touch the glass. The hand answers questions, three raps meaning "yes," and two raps "no." It also counts, a rap for each number.

The hand is operated by a thread which stretches across the stage. One end of the thread is attached to the table, beside the hand. The thread runs over the wrist and the loose end is held by an assistant, off the wing, or behind a screen at the edge of the platform. By pressing down on the string, the assistant causes the raps of the hand. The hand may, of course, be given for examination.

2. The Improved Rapping Hand

This hand raps on a glass incline that is set on a wooden stand on a table. A screen is placed around the back of the stand.

The thread again furnishes the motive power. It runs from one side of the small screen to the other, and then goes down a leg of the tiny screen, to the back of the stage.

With this hand, the magician can walk to the front of the platform, and the hand will rap on the glass, which he holds. When members of the audience try to make the hand rap, it simply slides off the glass.

The hand has a weight in the fingers, and is so well balanced, that a slight, imperceptible motion of the magician's hands will make it rock back and forth, and tap the glass. When a spectator wishes to try it, the magician picks up the hand and presses a button concealed under the cloth that encircles the wrist. The weight slides into the wrist, and throws the hand off balance, so it will no longer tap as it did before. When the magician holds it with the fingers down, he can press the bottom and let the weight slide into the fingers once more.

3. The Rapping Hand on the Board

This is another style of "Rapping Hand," that may be worked at close range. The hand is examined and is placed on an examined board,

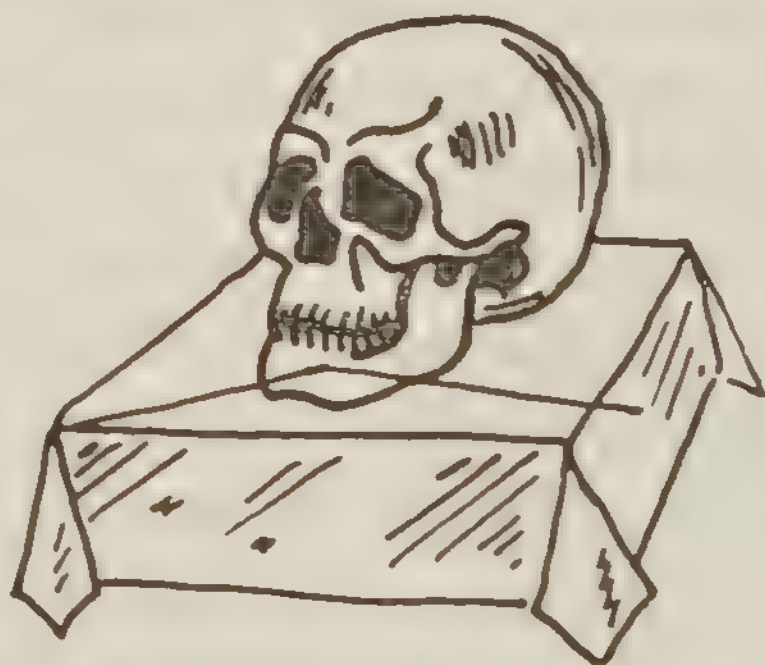
which the magician holds while the hand raps.

The board is finished with tiny holes and rough spots in its surface. Under the board are two cross-braces. There is a loose screw in one of these, and when the magician presses the screw, he operates a lever inside the board that raises a slender rod through one of the tiny holes. The rod presses the wrist of the hand and makes it rap. By secretly turning the screw, the magician can tighten it, so that its presence will not be detected. It seems to be just one of several screws in the cross-brace.

4. The Talking Skull

This is very weird and uncanny. A skull, placed on a sheet of glass, answers questions by raising and lowering its jaw.

The trick is worked just like the first "Rapping Hand"—the thread across the stage, attached to the side of the table. There is a tiny nail in the center of the jaw, and the assistant simply runs the thread down the front of the skull. The thread engages the nail, and the skull talks. (See drawing.) The skull may be examined. When the magician picks it up, the assistant raises the thread, so he can carry the skull away.



The skull may be operated by a thread stretching clear across the stage, with an assistant at each end. The magician holds the glass sheet, with the skull resting on it, and the assistants lower the thread onto the skull. At the conclusion of the rapping, the thread is lifted so that the magician may immediately walk forward.

It should be mentioned that the motion of the skull is not in the lower jaw, but in the upper part of the skull, which moves up and

down, although the jaw appears to do the moving. For this reason, the skull should be set well forward on the glass, for it will gradually slide backward.

5. The Rising and Falling Ball

This is a good old "Spirit Trick" that is always effective. A large ball is dropped on a nicked rod, set in a solid base. A hole passes through the center of the ball, so that it fits smoothly on the rod.

At the magician's command, the ball mysteriously slides up and down the rod, stopping, starting, answering questions by sudden drops, and finally jumping off the rod.

The type of apparatus generally used on the stage requires a special rod, which has a slit down the side that is turned away from the audience. Inside the rod is a sliding weight which is pulled by a cord. The cord runs up, over a pulley, and down the rod, then off stage to an assistant.

The weight has a projection which extends through the slit in the rod. This lifts the ball, when the assistant pulls the cord.

The smaller type of apparatus employs a thread, which is fastened to the top of the rod, by means of a cap. When the magician drops the ball on the rod, the thread is drawn down alongside the rod. When the assistant pulls the thread, it naturally raises the ball. When the thread is relaxed, the ball falls. At the finish of the trick, the assistant gives the thread a sharp jerk, and the ball jumps off the rod. Both the ball and rod may be examined, for by removing the tip of the rod, the magician may free the thread.

The small rod should be quite heavily weighted at the bottom. In the large apparatus, the stand is usually screwed to the floor. Otherwise the cord pulling might cause the contrivance to topple.

6. The Spirit Bell

The "Spirit Bell" is an ingenious piece of apparatus. It consists of a

glass bell, with a ring set in the top, to which a striker is affixed, the striker being *outside* the bell. After the bell has been examined, the ring is hung on a hook, which is the termination of an arm on a nickel-plated upright stand.

The bell commences to strike, and mysteriously answers questions, gives numbers, and acts in a very wonderful manner.

The cord is again used, as in the large version of the "Rising and Falling Ball." But the cord, running through the stand, causes a tiny metal prong to rise from within the hook that holds the ring. The prong goes through a hole in the ring, and presses a lever that causes the striker to ring the bell. This is a very ingenious mechanism.

The magician may carry the bell into the audience on the end of a wand, and it will continue to strike. In this case, the ring is set on a particular grooved spot near the end of the wand. The magician presses a lever at the other end of the wand, with his thumb, and a prong comes out of the wand and enters the ring. The wand must be very carefully made, as it must be mechanically efficient, yet appear to be an ordinary wand.

7. The Spirit Clock

A large glass clock dial is set on a stand, or held by a ring in the top. A shaft runs through the center of the dial, and a metal hand, or indicator is placed upon it.

The magician whirls the hand, and when it stops, it is pointing to a number on the dial that was previously indicated.

This trick can also be worked with a thread, but the thread arrangement has gradually been superseded by methods that involve a special hand. The hand has a circular arrangement at the center, like the two parts of a bicycle bell, but much smaller. The interior of the center is divided into twelve sections. One of these is weighted, and when the magician takes the hand, he simply turns the center, which is

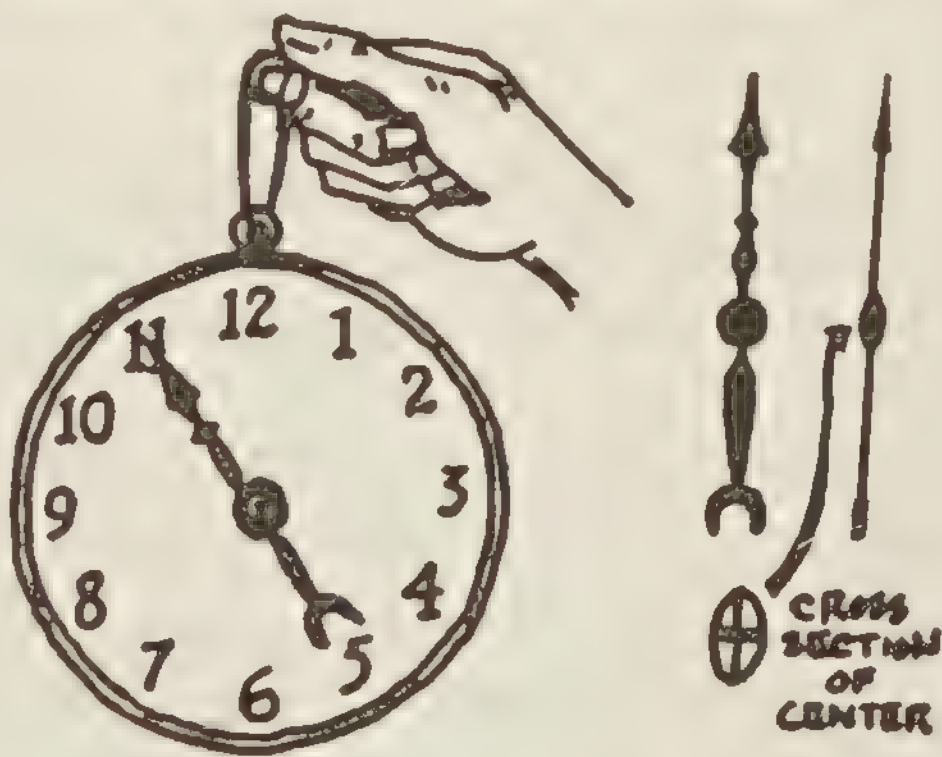
loose, a tiny click informing him as he reaches each section. He may thus turn the weight to any o'clock that he desires, and when the hand is revolved, it will stop, pointing to that hour.

If the indicator points to ten, the magician can make it point to two without touching the center. He removes the hand, shows it, and casually turns it around. When it is replaced on the shaft (which is scarcely thicker than a large needle), it will point to two, after it has been whirled.

An improved hand has recently been invented that points to any hour without complicated setting. The magician simply holds the clock in the position he wants it to stop. He presses the center, and a weight, suddenly released, drops to the part of the center circle that is at the bottom. The hand is then "set."

One form of hand is cut from a sheet of metal. It is studded with ornamental holes. Around the center hole are twelve tiny holes. The magician, instead of putting the center hole on the shaft, uses one of the twelve holes, which corresponds to the hour desired on the dial. When the hand is whirled, it is slightly off center, and it stops at the correct hour.

Some magicians use clocks with celluloid dials, to prevent the breakage that frequently occurs with glass.



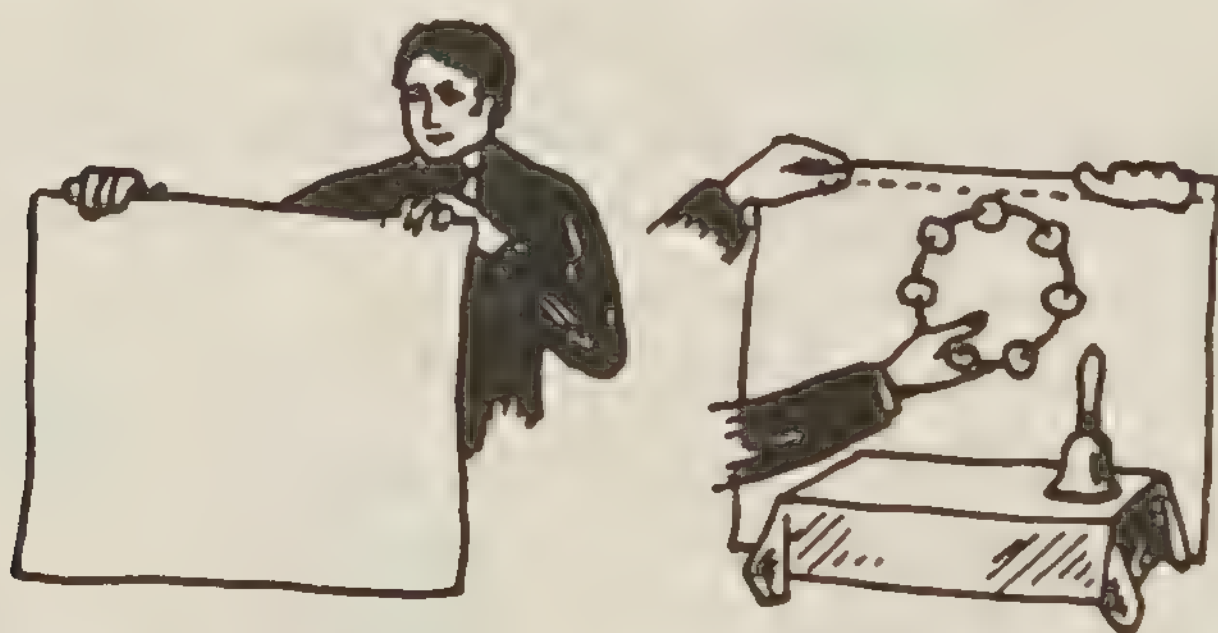
The "Spirit Clock." Note the round center of the dial. The average clock is larger than illustrated.

8. Spirit Seance in Full Light

The magician holds a cloth in front of a table, upon which tambourines, bells, and other articles are resting. The bells immediately

jump around, and raise havoc, but when the cloth is taken away, all is calm.

The cloth has a folding rod in the top. On one end is a set of false fingers. When the magician unrolls the cloth, the fingers come into view at the outer corner, and they appear to be his right hand. His hand is then free to produce the manifestations. At the finish, the right hand is slipped under the dummy fingers, and the cloth is quickly rolled inward at the top, then folded, and tossed aside.



“Seance in Full Light.” The front view shows the magician holding the cloth. The rear view exposes the dummy hand, and shows the magician’s right hand free, to operate the bells, etc.

Some magicians use a cloth which has a lazy-tongs in the top, the tongs being operated by the left hand. The left hand, of course, supports the cloth in each method, while the right hand is engaged.

At close range, the lights should be slightly dimmed to prevent detection of the false hand.

SECTION VI

Stage Illusions

Stage Illusions

STAGE ILLUSIONS ARE LARGE TRICKS, which are performed with people or animals, instead of inanimate objects. These pretentious experiments are a comparatively modern development of the art of magic, although a few illusions have been performed for many years. The modern magician, however, relies upon illusions as the principal features of his performance, and the conjuring exhibition which does not contain a number of illusions cannot meet the exacting demands of the present-day audience.

The use of the word "illusion" to describe large magical experiments came about through a peculiar development in stage conjuring. We think of an illusion as an unreal image, or a misleading appearance, and that is exactly what the original Stage Illusions were. Through the use of mirrors, placed at proper angles, such mysteries as the "Sphinx," or "Decapitated Head" were first accomplished, and the exhibitions were not really tricks, but large optical illusions. Hence the term "illusion" was applied to them.

Nowadays, there are "Palaces of Illusions," and illusion shows at amusement parks and similar places, where "Spidora," the girl with the spider-body, the "Half-Lady" and other mysterious curiosities are exhibited. These are all survivals and developments of the original Stage Illusions, but the science of modern stagecraft has progressed along entirely different lines.

The advantages of mirrors were quickly recognized, and were applied to aiding magical disappearances of human beings. These new

creations were still called "illusions," although they were not strictly such. Then, the public demand calling for more exhibitions of a spectacular nature, mirrors were gradually eliminated, until now they are rarely used in mysteries of the stage. But the term "illusion" has remained, so that to-day every large trick is called a Stage Illusion, and the man presenting it is known as an illusionist.

This is probably one reason why the general public attributes large tricks to "mirrors" just as the average person looks upon the magician's sleeves with suspicion, and believes that "the quickness of hand deceives the eye."

Mirrors have been discarded by magicians, not because better devices have been invented, but because mirrors are cumbersome, expensive and breakable. They are suited only to permanent shows that remain in one place and do not travel. To the itinerant illusionist, mirrors are a nuisance. He cannot afford to carry a reserve supply, and he does not like to depend upon them.

The vast majority of Stage Illusions involve the appearance or disappearance of one or more persons, and sometimes of animals. Therefore, we will consider illusions of this type at the beginning of the chapter.

First, it must be understood that the method is the important part of every large trick, and that although two illusions may be entirely different in their effect, they may be identical in method of performance. For example: one magician may cause a woman to appear in a cabinet; another may make her disappear from a similar cabinet. Both are using the same method, but one is reversing the procedure adopted by the other.

When a person witnesses a magical disappearance, he wonders, "Where did the person go?" When he sees an appearance, his question is, "Where did that person come from?"

Now, when we see an empty cabinet, and later observe a person

emerge from it, common sense tells us that there are only a few ways by which the mystery may be accomplished, as follows:

- (1) The person enters the cabinet from the bottom.
- (2) The person enters the cabinet from the back.
- (3) The person enters the cabinet from the top.
- (4) The person is concealed behind the cabinet, behind a door, or somewhere outside the cabinet.
- (5) The person is concealed within the cabinet.

Having briefly outlined the basic principles upon which nearly all appearances and disappearances are based, we will consider the application of those methods by explaining the actual working of various illusions. It should be remembered that there are some illusions which combine the principles of others, and are thus very effective:

1. The Threefold Screen

A threefold screen, mounted on a triangular base, is wheeled on the stage, closed, and is shown on all sides, with the opening of the screen being brought to the front. Two assistants spread the wings of the screen, showing it empty, and then close it again. When the screen is opened a girl is inside.

The center panel of the screen is made of cloth, but is broken in the center, two strips of elastic running up the edges, which overlap. The girl is inside when the screen is brought on. The instant that the opening of the screen faces the audience the girl spreads the opening and goes through the back of the screen, where she is hidden when the screen is opened. As soon as the screen is closed, she comes through the back, to the interior where she is ready to appear.

This a very quick, smart illusion. The panels of the screen are dark, and of a pattern that renders the opening in the center unnoticeable. The triangular base must be much larger than the area surrounded by the closed screen, so that the girl will have a place to stand in back.

Wheels are beneath the corners of the base.

2. The Mummy Case

This is another form of opening appearance, to which the preceding remarks are equally applicable. An Egyptian mummy case is standing on the stage. Two assistants swing it open, for it is hinged at one side. One assistant swings back the rear door, the other swings forward the front.

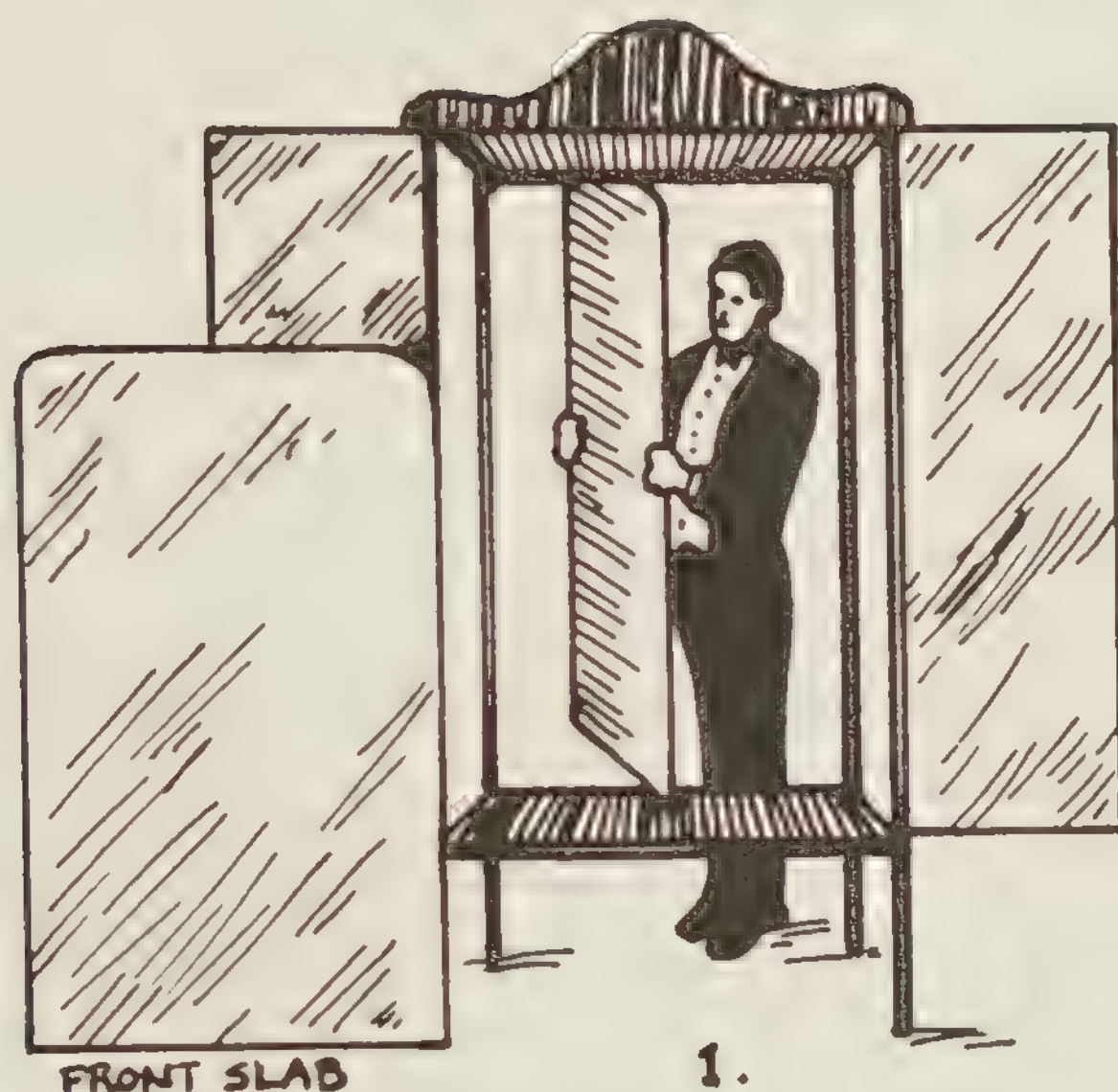
A young lady, attired in Egyptian costume is revealed. She steps out and the case is closed, apparently empty. It is closed, immediately reopened, and there is the magician!

The performer is in the back door of the mummy case, which is swung back an instant before the front door is swung forward. Thus the magician is concealed from view. The moment the girl comes out, the front door is closed, and then the back door is shut. When the doors are again opened, the magician is inside. The audience is always surprised, because the illusion starts out merely as an introduction to the girl. The people see that the mummy case contains no one else, and when it is closed they do not expect to see it reopened. Thus the appearance of the magician comes as a mystifying climax.

3. The Japanese Cabinet

This is a very clear and mystifying illusion, performed by a Japanese magician. It shows how simple methods may be used to effect a disappearance as well as an appearance, but in this case the magician resorts to additional procedure which bewilders the spectators. This makes it suitable as a vanish, and it follows with a reappearance.

A cabinet is mounted on a platform. There is no back to the cabinet, but there are two folding doors in front, which swing out like wings. The cabinet is somewhat wider than a man's body, and the interior is somewhat taller than a man.



1. The magician showing the cabinet empty.

The assistant steps in the cabinet, and the magician puts a slab up in back of him, forming a rear to the cabinet. A similar slab is placed in front, so the assistant is walled in on all sides. The doors are closed in front, and a chain is loosely looped around the cabinet. Then the chain is unfastened in front, and the doors are swung open. The front slab is removed, and the cabinet is shown empty. The front slab is laid against one of the doors.

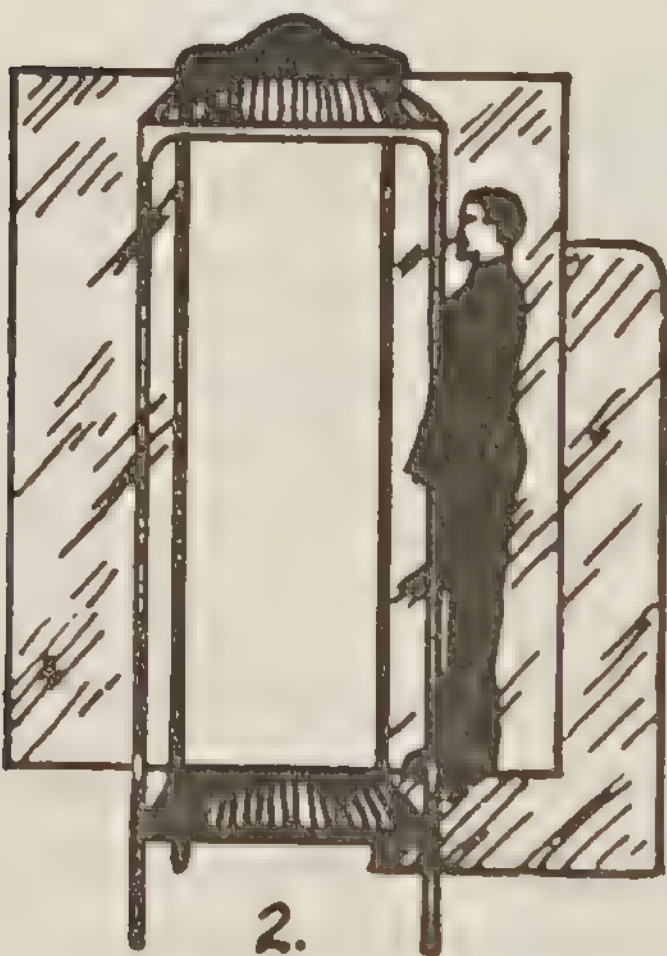
At this point the keen spectator supposes that the assistant is in back of the cabinet behind the rear slab. But the magician walks around the cabinet, and takes down the rear slab, whirling it around. He leans it against the back of the cabinet, and walks straight through, showing that the assistant has entirely disappeared.

Then he replaces the slabs, closes the door, and tightens the chain. He undoes the chain, opens the door, removes the front slab, and there is the missing assistant!

One side of the cabinet is pivoted. After the magician has enclosed the assistant in the cabinet, he opens the front doors, and the assistant immediately revolves the side, so that he is hidden behind the door. This action cannot be seen because the front slab still hides the interior of the cabinet. We will suppose that the left side of the cabinet revolves. Then the cabinet must be set towards the left of the stage, so that people in the boxes will not be able to see in back of the door, their unusual angle of vision being thus destroyed.

The magician removes the front slab, and sets it against the left door which hides the assistant. When he goes around the cabinet, the magician naturally takes the right side, and casually swings the right door part way shut, thus indirectly calling attention to its innocence, and making the spectators subconsciously assume that the left door is just as innocent. The removal of the rear slab causes no complications, but thoroughly mystifies the spectators.

As soon as the slabs are replaced, the assistant comes back into the cabinet, before the doors are shut. The use of the chain is merely a bit of by-play. It is slack enough to let the side panel pivot, and it also helps to hold the assistant in position. Needless to say, the assistant stands "edgewise" when he is outside of the cabinet.



2. Where the assistant is concealed. (Rear view.)

4. The Cabinet of Proteus

This is a very old illusion, one of the first in which the principle of mirrors was used to conceal a person.

The cabinet is rather large, and it has a center post, set in a trifle

from the front. Two full length mirrors run from the center post to the rear corners of the cabinet. Thus, when people look into the cabinet they see the walls reflected in the mirror, and they think they are seeing the rear of the cabinet.

Of course, more than one-quarter of the cabinet is thus concealed from view, and two or three or more people can be hidden within the secret space. The cabinet has a curtain in front. When the curtain is drawn shut, the concealed persons push the mirrors to the sides of the cabinet (the mirrors being hinged at the rear corners). The backs of the mirrors resemble the interior of the cabinet, so when they are opened, the cabinet is really empty.

Then the concealed parties make their appearance.

This cabinet may be used for the appearance of separate individuals; it is also suitable for disappearances and reappearances, and some very effective and mystifying combinations have been worked with its aid.

The principle of the mirrors is also found in:

5. The Throne Illusion

A throne is exhibited upon a platform. The legs of the throne are connected by walls, forming a box, but the front of the bottom is open, and people can see beneath it. The throne may be shown by revolving the platform.

A canopy is placed over the throne; when it is lifted, a queenly young lady occupies the chair.

Under the throne is a single leg near the center, which seems to be merely a support. In reality it is the junction point of two mirrors as in the Cabinet of Proteus. The girl is hidden in the space behind the mirrors.

6. The Human Die Box

This illusion is an elaboration of the famous old trick known as the "Sucker Die Box," but the modus operandi is entirely different.

A large box, with two adjacent compartments, is placed upon a platform. A girl enters the box, which is then raised in the air by means of chains.



The magician opens one side of the box and shows it empty, as pictured in the illustration. Then he closes that side, and shows the other half of the box. Of course the spectators suspect that the girl is moving from one side to the other, and finally they demand that the magician open both sides. He does so, and shows the box entirely empty, opening doors at the top and the back to prove the vacancy.

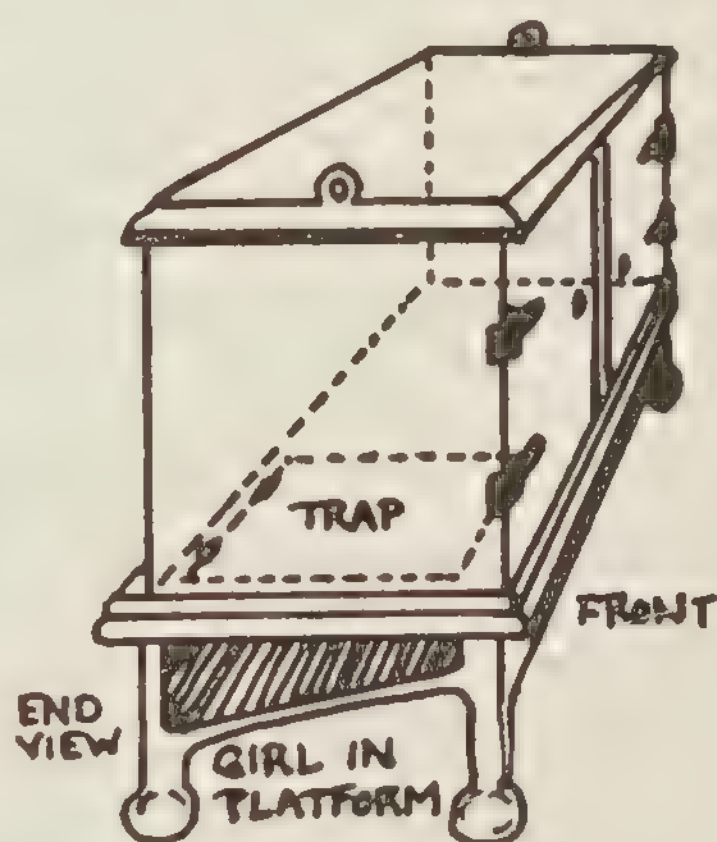
A moment later the girl comes running through the audience.

The girl makes her "get-away" by means of the platform upon which the cabinet is set. The platform is quite large, and while the chains are being attached to the box, the girl goes through a trap in the bottom and lies out of sight in the platform.

The box is raised, and the magician begins to show first one side and then the other. Of course this draws attention to the suspended box. The assistants push the platform off the stage to get it out of the way, and the girl immediately emerges from the platform and runs around to the entrance of the theater, while the magician is exhibiting the big box.

The principle of concealment in the platform is not well suited to disappearances, because it is difficult for the girl to get into a small space quickly hence the platform must be quite bulky. In appearances, a smaller platform may be used. But in the trick just described, the use of the platform is justified, for the suspicious looking box serves as misdirection.

A platform of the type used in this illusion is generally made thinner at the front than at the back, the side walls sloping downward towards the rear. This makes the platform appear thinner than it really is. (Fig. 2.)



7. The Shower Bath Illusion

A skeleton cabinet, surrounded by a canopy, is brought on the stage. A large hose is attached to the top of the cabinet, and the water is turned on. The canopy is dropped, showing the skeleton framework, with a shower bath pouring down within. The water is turned on

more rapidly, and while it is at full force, a girl in a bathing suit suddenly appears in the midst of the shower!

The back of the stage has a dark colored background. Attached to the back of the cabinet is a roller blind of the same color as the back drop. The girl is hidden behind the roller blind.

If the cabinet were shown empty, the audience might detect the presence of the spring blind. To prevent this, the water is turned on and comes through sprays all over the top of the cabinet, so when the canopy is dropped, the cabinet appears entirely empty. The water is coming with just enough force to aid in the illusion, but it is not running rapidly enough to prevent the audience from realizing that the cabinet is empty.

When the water is turned on full force, the roller blind is released, and the girl enters the shower.

In some illusions, the spring blind principle is employed without any attempt at concealment, or any effort to make it blend with the background. Such a plan is inartistic, and is often detected, unless a very small blind is used, and the cabinet is set close to the back drop.

8. The Ladder Illusion

A tall ladder is set near the back of the stage—the ladder extending straight up from a firm base.

A girl climbs the ladder, from in back. Half-way up she stops; the magician fires a pistol, and the girl is gone!

Some of the rungs in the ladder are cut in half, and are hollow, but the audience seeing the front halves, takes them to be regular rungs. Roller blinds are coiled in the false rungs. When the girl is half-way up the ladder, she stands on a thin metal bar hidden behind one of the rungs, and grasps a similar bar higher up. At the report of the pistol, an assistant releases a cord, and the blinds are instantly drawn down between the rungs, hiding the girl from view. As the blinds

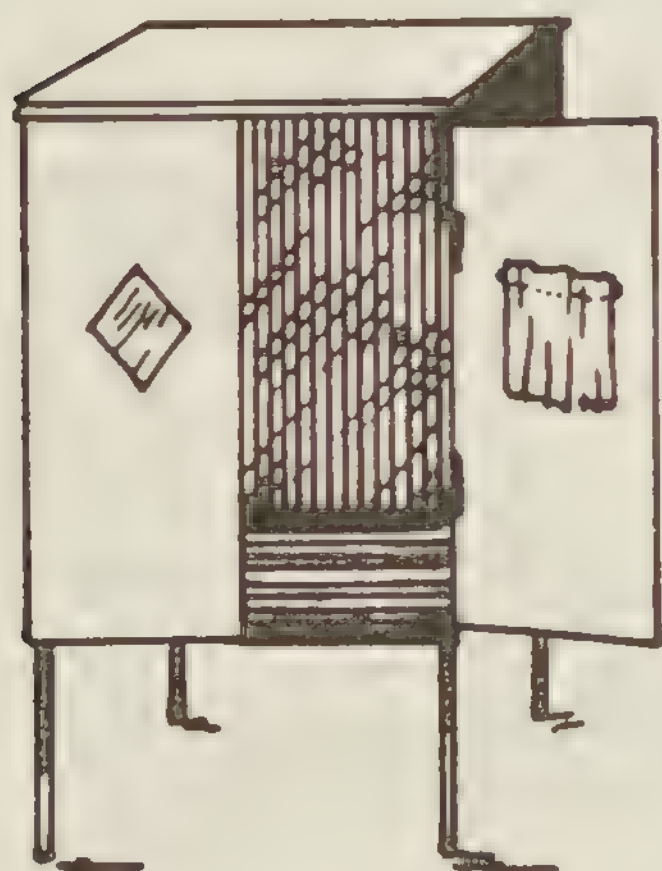
correspond to the back drop in color, the illusion is perfect, the rungs of the ladder making comparatively small spaces to be concealed.

The curtain is immediately dropped upon the scene, so that the ladder and the girl may be removed.

The ladder used in this illusion is much larger than an ordinary ladder. Proper lighting of the stage, and exact timing are important elements in a trick of this nature.

9. The Spirit Cabinet

In its original form, this device was used for the production of pseudo-psychic phenomena. The apparatus consists of a cubical cabinet, mounted upon a thin platform. There are two doors in the front of the cabinet, and there are diamond shaped holes in the doors, but small curtains, hanging within, prevent a view of the interior.



An illustration of the cabinet with one door open, showing the striped interior.

The magician wheels the cabinet around, showing the outside, then he opens the doors and shows the inside. Tambourines, bells, etc., are placed within the cabinet, and they are thrown out through the holes, as soon as the doors have been closed. The cabinet is instantly opened, and is shown empty. The manifestations are repeated, and a stool, placed within the cabinet, comes

tumbling out the moment that the magician opens the doors, yet no one is visible inside the cabinet.

The secret depends upon a concealed assistant.

The back of the cabinet is divided in half, vertically, and the two sections are hinged like doors, so that they open outward in the center.

They are connected by a chain, which prevents them from opening very far.

Within the cabinet, about twelve inches in front of the back, are two similar doors, which form a false back. These doors swing frontward, and fold against the sides of the cabinet.

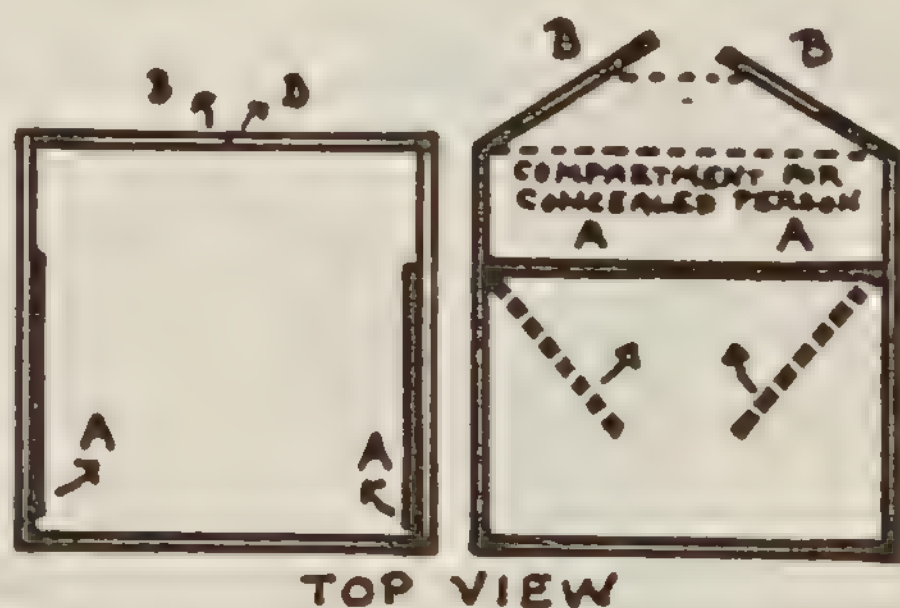
The interior of the cabinet is painted with vertical stripes, and both sides of the false back are painted to match.

When the cabinet is brought on, the assistant is sitting inside. The cabinet is not large enough for him to stand up, but it is quite large inside.

The cabinet is shown on all sides, and as soon as the front is towards the audience, the assistant goes to the back of the cabinet, and swings out the back doors, which open only a foot or so, thanks to the chain connecting them. At the same time, he takes hold of the two inner doors, which are against the sides of the cabinet, and draws them shut, so that they form a false back. Small strips of leather are attached to the inner doors, and make it easy to close them.

This is but the work of an instant; so the magician can immediately open the front doors and show the cabinet empty. The assistant is behind the false back, but he is partly outside of the cabinet, and the false back comes very close to where the real back should be. The cabinet thus appears to be of normal depth, and seems quite empty.

When the front doors are closed, the assistant comes into the



A-A · FALSE BACK OF CABINET
B-B · HINGED BACK OF CABINET

Explanatory diagrams showing the false back, and the extension of the true back.

cabinet, and throws out the bells and tambourines. He may thrust a gloved "spirit hand" through one of the holes in the front of the cabinet. When the stool is placed in the cabinet, he leans it against the front doors, and goes back into his hiding place, tossing a bell through the front just as he closes the false back. The magician instantly opens the front doors, and out tumbles the stool, apparently ejected by an unseen force.

The square cabinet has recently been adapted to another illusion of an entirely different effect, which illustrates how the same principle may be used in different ways. In describing the more recent illusion, the effect will be omitted, and the working method explained alone.

The magician's assistant puts on a long robe, with a hood over his head. Then, at the magician's command, he goes towards the wing of the stage to get a screen which is standing there. As he steps behind the screen, another assistant, dressed in the same costume, takes his place, and sets his hands on top of the screen. The original assistant keeps on walking and goes off the stage (the screen hiding him until he reaches the wing). Then the double folds up the screen and carries it to the magician. Together, they put the screen beneath the cabinet, to prove that there is nothing there. Then the double gets into the cabinet, and the doors are closed.

The double immediately divests himself of the robe, and then rings bells and throws them through the holes in the front doors of the cabinet. The magician fires a pistol, and the ringing ceases. The double slides into the back of the cabinet, and closes the false back. The magician opens the doors, and shows that the cabinet is empty—except for the robe.

In the meantime the original assistant has doffed his robe, off stage, and has run around to the back of the audience. The moment that the magician shows the cabinet empty, the original assistant comes running through the audience and up on the stage.

The magician closes the doors of the cabinet, and hands the robe to the assistant. The assistant lays the robe on the cabinet, and pushes the cabinet off the stage, turning it around as he does so (the man inside having gone into the cabinet and pulled the back shut).

This is a very effective illusion, for the assistant seems to be in the cabinet one instant and in the audience the next. It also acquaints us with a method of exchanging one person for another, which is used in Quick Change Illusions. One of these is called:

10. Mephisto and Faust

A large cloth is stretched out from the wing of the stage, and is fastened to a rope, so that it forms a curtain extending from the wing. An assistant goes behind the cloth, and thrusts his head and hands through the cloth. The magician puts a huge devil's head on the assistant, and leaves him standing there, with his hands still showing.

Then the magician puts on a long robe, with a hood. He releases the outer end of the cloth and drapes it over the assistant's shoulders. Then, walking in back of the cloth, he pulls down the end which is attached to the wing, and drapes it over the assistant.

So the audience sees the magician, as Faust, garbed in the long robe, and the assistant, as Mephisto, with his hands through the cloth, and a devil's head upon his own.

Then surprising things happen. There is a commotion in the audience, and the magician, himself, comes walking down the aisle! When he reaches the stage, he bows, and points to Faust, who removes his robe, and turns out to be the assistant!

Together, they remove the devil's head from the person wearing it, and a young lady is revealed!

Now for the explanation. When the assistant goes behind the cloth, the girl is already there, having come on from the wing. The assistant puts his head through the cloth, but the girl's hands go through

instead of his. When the devil's head is placed on the assistant, he draws his head through the cloth, and the girl puts her head inside the devil's head. The audience still see hands which they believe belong to the assistant.

The assistant walks off stage, and while the magician is putting on his robe, the assistant dons a similar garment. When the magician walks behind the cloth to remove it from the wing, he continues off the stage, and the assistant, standing in readiness, takes his place. The magician takes off his robe, and goes to the back of the audience. Then all is ready for the climax.

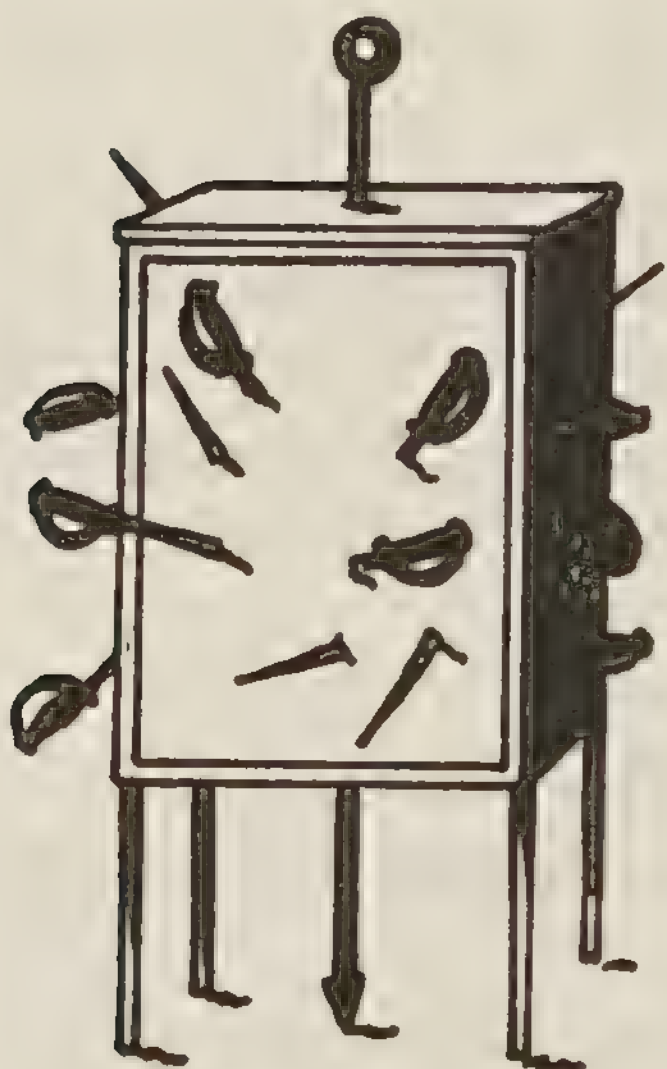
11. The Sword Cabinet

The "Sword Cabinet" is a modernized version of the "Indian Basket Trick."

The cabinet is just about large enough to accommodate a girl in a sitting position. The girl gets in the cabinet, and the cover is placed on. Then the magician takes a dozen cavalry swords, and thrusts them through the walls of the cabinet, in holes provided for them. Although every part of the cabinet seems to be pierced, the girl makes no outcry. Finally the magician takes a heavy staff and thrusts it right down through the center of the cover, the end of the rod appearing below the bottom of the platform upon which the cabinet rests. It seems impossible for the girl to be unhurt, but when the swords are removed, the lid is lifted and the front is opened, out steps the girl, as well as ever.

Explanation: The girl does not take up as much room in the cabinet as people imagine. She has her knees doubled up, and her hands folded in front of them, and in this position it is possible for the magician to insert the swords without injuring the girl. The cabinet is "tailor-made," that is, it is built to suit the girl, and the proper positions of the swords are determined by experiment.

For example: swords can be thrust through the cabinet from the back or front, passing just above the girl's shoulders, one sword on each side of her neck. Swords may be thrust across the cabinet, one beneath the girl's knees; the other between her knees; the other between her knees and her body. Other swords are pushed through at angles near the corners of the cabinet, and they do not touch the girl. The staff thrust straight down through the cabinet passes between her body and her knees.



A typical "Sword Cabinet" with swords and spear thrust through it. More than a dozen swords may be pushed through without injuring the person who is doubled up inside.

From the outside, the trick appears almost impossible, but could the audience look down in the cabinet from the top, they would quickly see how simple it is. There is plenty of space to accommodate the swords, and although the girl is hemmed in on all sides, and her position is somewhat cramped and uncomfortable, she is not in danger from any of the blades.

12. The New Sword Cabinet

In this improved form of the old illusion, the girl stands upright in a small cabinet. Swords are thrust through in a haphazard manner, and finally attention is called to the slanting top of the cabinet, which looks as though it might contain the girl. The magician thrusts a huge pole through the top of the cabinet to prove that the girl is not there. Then the swords are removed, and the girl emerges, uninjured.

The cabinet is mounted upon a round pedestal, and the girl, as soon

as the cabinet is closed, slides down through the pedestal and through a trap in the stage. Thus the swords may be inserted anywhere. After the swords are removed, the girl comes back up into the cabinet.

The pedestal is smaller in diameter than the square-bottomed cabinet, and as the girl appears to fill the cabinet, no one believes that she can go through the pedestal.

If the pedestal is tall enough, the trap in the stage is unnecessary, for the girl can remain in the pedestal, with her head and shoulders in the cabinet. In this case the magician must be careful about thrusting swords through the bottom of the cabinet. The stage trap is usually preferred, because then the magician may invite members of the audience to put the swords through the cabinet.

Conclusion

IN BRINGING THIS VOLUME to its close, the author feels that the reader, who should now be conversant with many of the principles of magic, is entitled to a few final remarks regarding the application of his present knowledge.

The writing of a book on magic is a much more difficult task to-day than it was years ago, because there are so many new developments of both an artistic and a scientific nature. The author has endeavored to thoroughly explain the basic principles of conjuring to the beginner, and at the same time to offer material of real value to the more advanced student.

The reader should remember that there is a vast difference between knowing how a trick is done, and knowing how to do it. In the same way, it is much easier to explain how a trick is done than to go into details regarding the working methods.

In this book, the purpose has been to explain the mechanical details and secrets of tricks in which the presentation is fairly obvious, or easily developed by the individual performer. The explanations of more standard tricks, or special items have been elaborated, to include precise working methods. An old trick, performed in a different way, or presented with careful attention to detail, is often better than a novelty.

There is a small class of readers that demands new tricks, and also expects a magical writer to describe no other tricks than those which he has created. This is a mistaken notion.

Fifty percent or more of all "new" tricks are nothing but old tricks in a slightly different—and often inferior—form. And the great majority of tricks that are entirely new is made up of effects which are

virtually worthless. The novelties of three years ago, heralded as wonderful effects, are forgotten to-day; while such classics as the "Die Box" never grow old. Therefore, a description of a workable routine for an old effect is better than a dozen explanations of passing novelties.

In the same way, a book containing nothing but tricks that have been invented by one man is likely to be stereotyped, and to include effects which are suitable to him alone, and not to the magical fraternity at large. The author has, for this reason, deliberately omitted from this book certain tricks of his own invention in order to include effects which he considers better than his own ideas.

These remarks apply to the presentation of magic as well as to explanatory writing. The aspiring magician should never neglect the old tricks. He should look upon them just as a musician looks upon classical pieces, or as an actor regards Shakespearean drama. He should seek to add his own personality to the effects that he performs, and should always remember the old adage: "It's not what you do that counts; it's how you do it!"

A magical show consisting of new and untried effects is bound to suffer, and the magician who spends his time in trying to create original methods is often wasting his efforts. He should devote himself towards the perfection of standard sleights and effects that have proven their merit.

It must be remembered that magic is an ever advancing art, and that the styles of fifty years ago are obsolete in legerdemain just as in every other living field of human endeavor. But no one man can revolutionize the general trend of things, and each individual should be satisfied to contribute a reasonable amount of effort to the cause of progress.

Next to actually doing tricks, the best way to learn the ways of magic is to study a magical performance. The person who is acquainted with the fundamentals can witness a first-class magical

show, and, knowing how most of the tricks are performed, can devote all his observation to the study of the magician's presentation. In this way he can gain valuable and practical information, but he should not turn around and mimic the ways of a successful conjurer. He should seek to work his tricks in his own way, smoothing over the rough and unsatisfactory parts of his individual presentation by the application of the methods of expert performers whom he has observed.

The best advice is this: work out a trick or an effect in your own way, to the best of your ability, without ever seeing any one else perform it. Then, when you have reached a satisfactory point, watch some one else perform the trick. You will then be able to alter or improve your own method of presentation, but it will still preserve your own style or individuality.

The methods of experienced magicians have been successful because they are built around the personalities of individuals. Yet many capable magicians perform the same tricks, and many of them have similar ways of presentation.

Every magician must extemporize. He cannot follow an exact part or an unvarying routine. For when mistakes occur—as they always will—he must rise to the situation. Almost every difficulty has some way out, and finding it is part of the game. If a trick is a total loss, pass it off, and forget it. The magician must never be discouraged; he must always be optimistic, and preserve his composure.

Last of all, the coming magician should choose the style that suits him. He can introduce comedy into his tricks; he may be talkative, if he can “patter” well; he may be silent, deliberate, or rapid, and, if it suits him, he may play a very mysterious role. But he should not attempt a part that is not suitable to him, or he will appear ridiculous. Every person can develop himself in the performance of magic, provided that he adapts his tricks to his own personality.

So bear in mind these concluding words: study the methods of magic, learn the tricks you like, practice them to perfection, work them to suit your easiest style—and then be yourself!

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